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I BEFORE E

STORIES WITH ART BY

KIETH

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1

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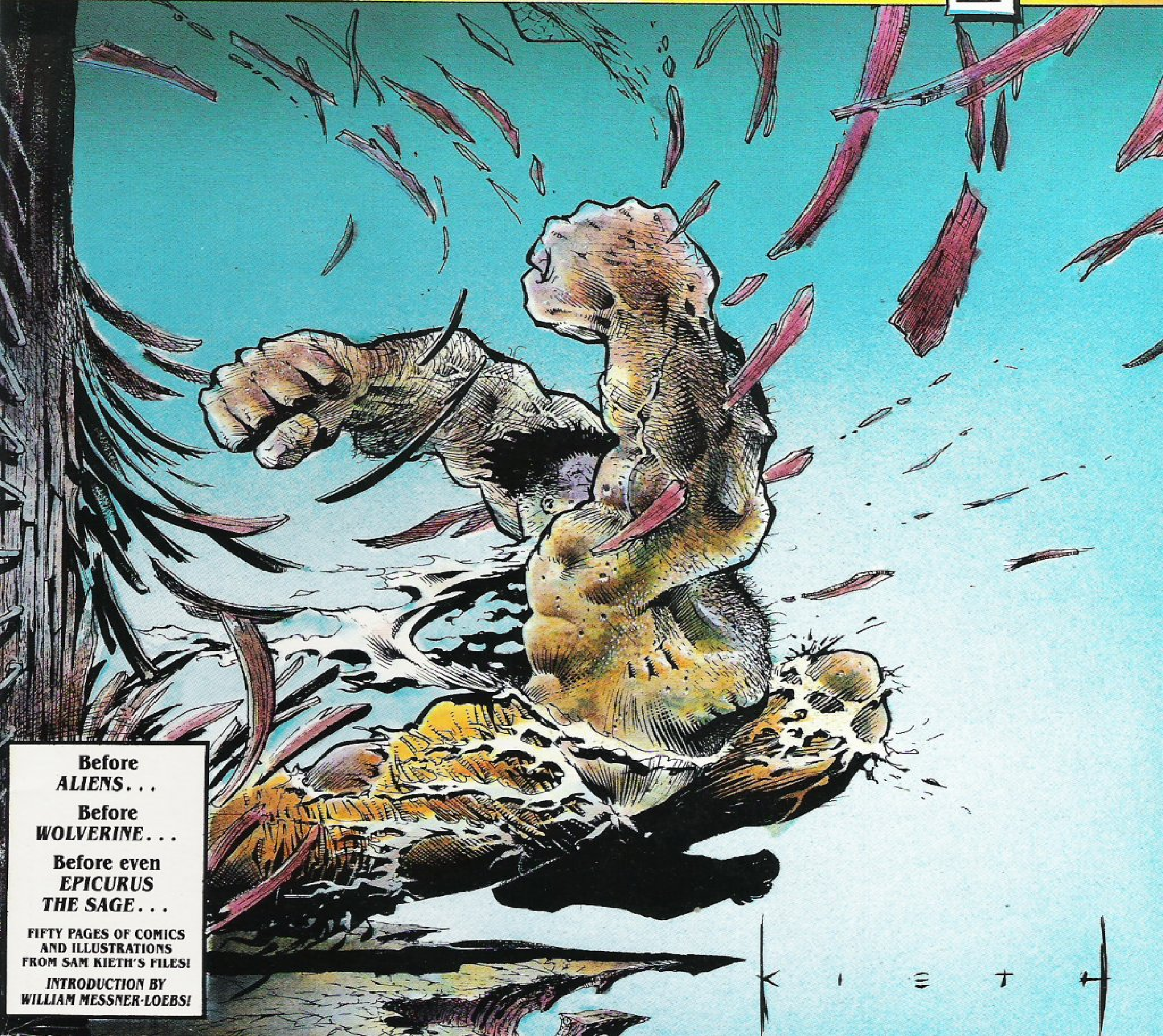


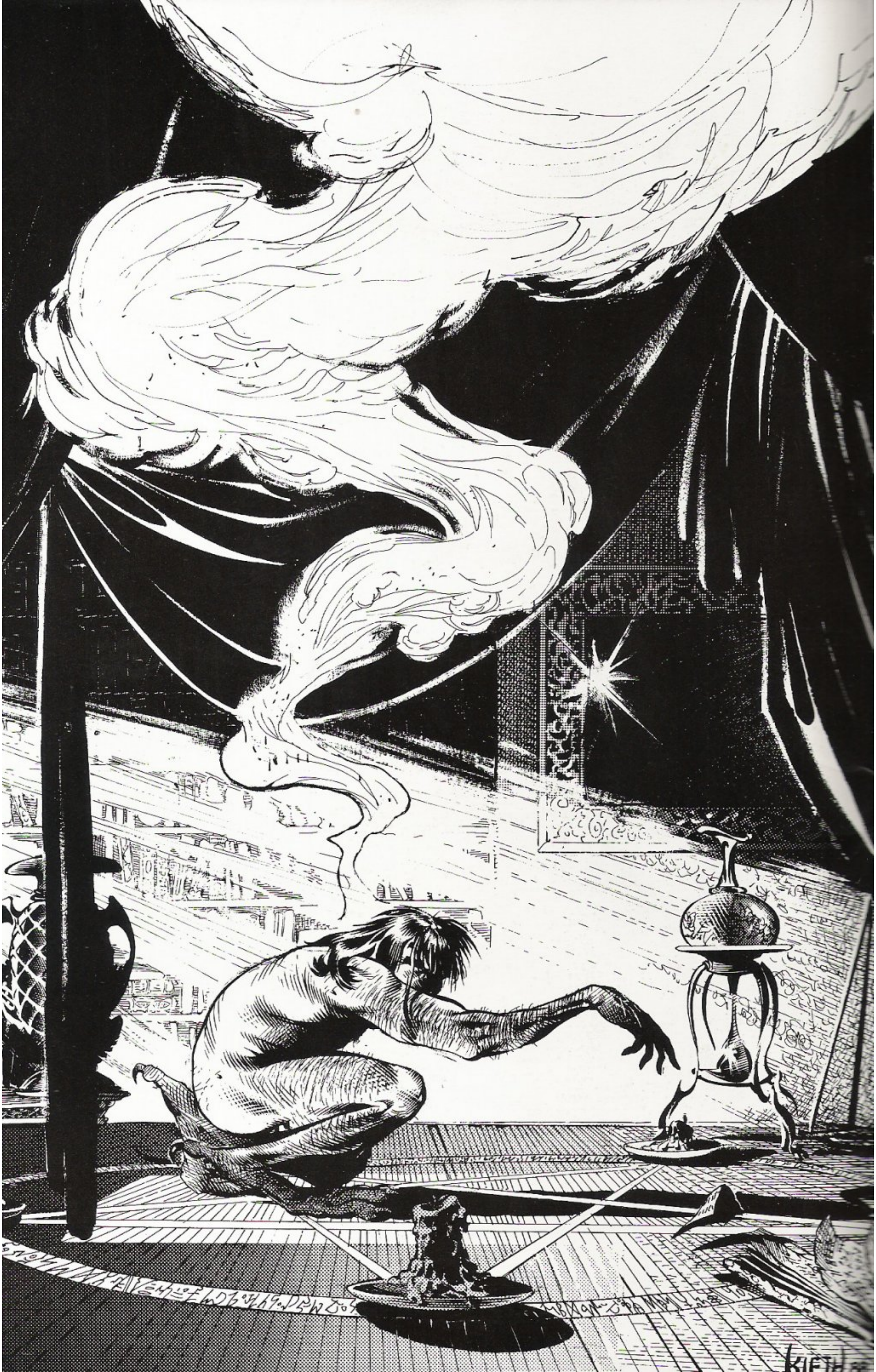
Before *ALIENS*. . .

Before *WOLVERINE*. . .

Before even *EPICURUS THE SAGE*. . .

FIFTY PAGES OF COMICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SAM KIETH'S FILES!

***INTRODUCTION BY* WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS!**


KIETH

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INTRODUCTION by William Messner-Loebs

I first met Sam at the first San Diego Comics Convention I ever attended. Harvey Kurtzman introduced us. Except he didn't know it. You see, Harvey Kurtzman was giving a seminar on storytelling and we were both hurrying to get there, having only been informed that morning that the seminar wouldn't take place in the Convention Center proper, but in a tiny room in the Hotel San Diego, that monument to antiseptic temporary living. So we sprinted the five blocks, and ran up a flight of stairs. . . and came to a dead halt. The entire second floor landing and hallway were filled with people – milling, hot, desperate people. When it turned out that there were over 70 people waiting for possible cancellations in the 22-person seminar, we left, loudly bemoaning our fates.

Somehow, all that bemoaning turned into introductions. Sam and his friend were amazed to discover that I was a *published* comix artist, and even more amazed when they saw the first two issues of *Journey* (black-and-white, no super-heroes, no sf, no funny animals, no monsters). "This is kinda *like* a comic book, huh?" Sam's friend remarked.

We were still talking when a friend of mine came up, all excited because he had just made his first sale to Marvel. I turned to speak to him and when I turned back, they both were gone. I felt bad. When I was coming up in fandom, there was a history of professionals treating fans with contempt and rudeness. Now here I was, just barely professional, and I had managed to insult my first fans. Whotta maroon!

My next contact with Sam was at Petuniacon, put on by my then-publisher, Aardvark-Vanaheim. He approached me with with what I have since come to recognize as the Kieth hard sell. "Hi. You probably don't remember me. There's no reason why you should. In fact, you probably have tons of worthless, talentless, pushy fan-boys coming up to you all the time. You hate me already. I have some things you can look at, and I tried to base my style on yours, but I'm just not as good as you are. So you really shouldn't look. Forget I said anything."

"Look," I said. "I *do* remember you. Honest. And I'd like to see whatever you've done."

"No, you don't. It sucks."

"Yes, I do."

There followed a brief, undignified scuffle, while I wrested the portfolio from Sam. Looking at my prize, two things became immediately apparent. The first was, whatever tiny flaws there might be, he was publishable right then. The other thing was that he was technically better than I was by a wide margin. I offered to show him around and introduce him to the vast number of people I was acquainted with. Although they usually responded with "William Messner-Loebs *who*?" I did manage to open some contacts for him, and he made some for himself, and the result of it all was that in a couple of months he had landed inking work on *Mage*, beginning the period (in my opinion) of that book's greatest artist success.

We kept in touch, always planning to work together. It was Sam, in fact, who let Diana Schutz know I was available to do *Jonny Quest*. And all the while, Sam was agonizing. . .worrying that no one would ever know him as anything but an inker, that his style was too Wrightson/Suydam influenced, that his success had been a fluke, that the sun wouldn't rise the next morning. And as he worried and fretted and stewed, he just kept getting better and better. I sometimes think that the more artists worry about their work. . .remaining hungry and dissatisfied, the better work they do. At least for Sam, self-doubt and misery have been the lubricate for his genius.

"You're *good*, Sam," I'd tell him. "And all you have to do is get one book out there that has the quality of your sketchbooks and samples, and you'll have more work than you can handle."

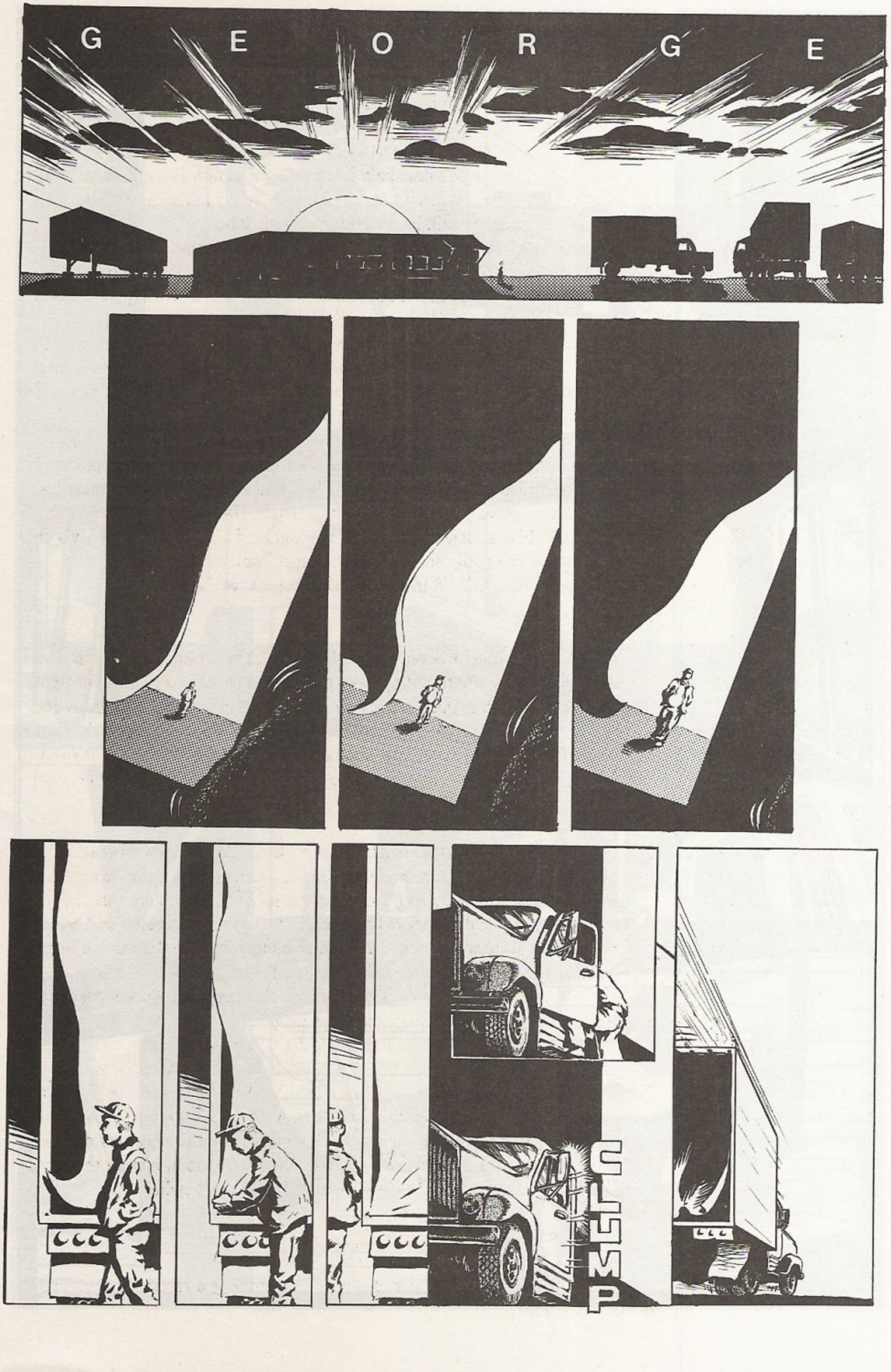
"Oh, you're just being nice, Bill," he would sigh. "My stuff sucks. And all anyone will ever remember me for is as 'Matt Wagner's inker'." Well, things did go slowly for a while. *Wandering Stars* died aborning, and *Sandman* misfired. Sam sank into morbidity. Then we finally did get to work together. We collaborated on *Epicurus the Sage*, a book which exalted my smart-alec comments on Hellenic Culture with the fluid brilliance of Sam's line. I really think that in a certain type of parody illustration Sam work will now set the standard and become a classic in the field. And as you look through his early work in this book, you'll see that he had it in him all the time.

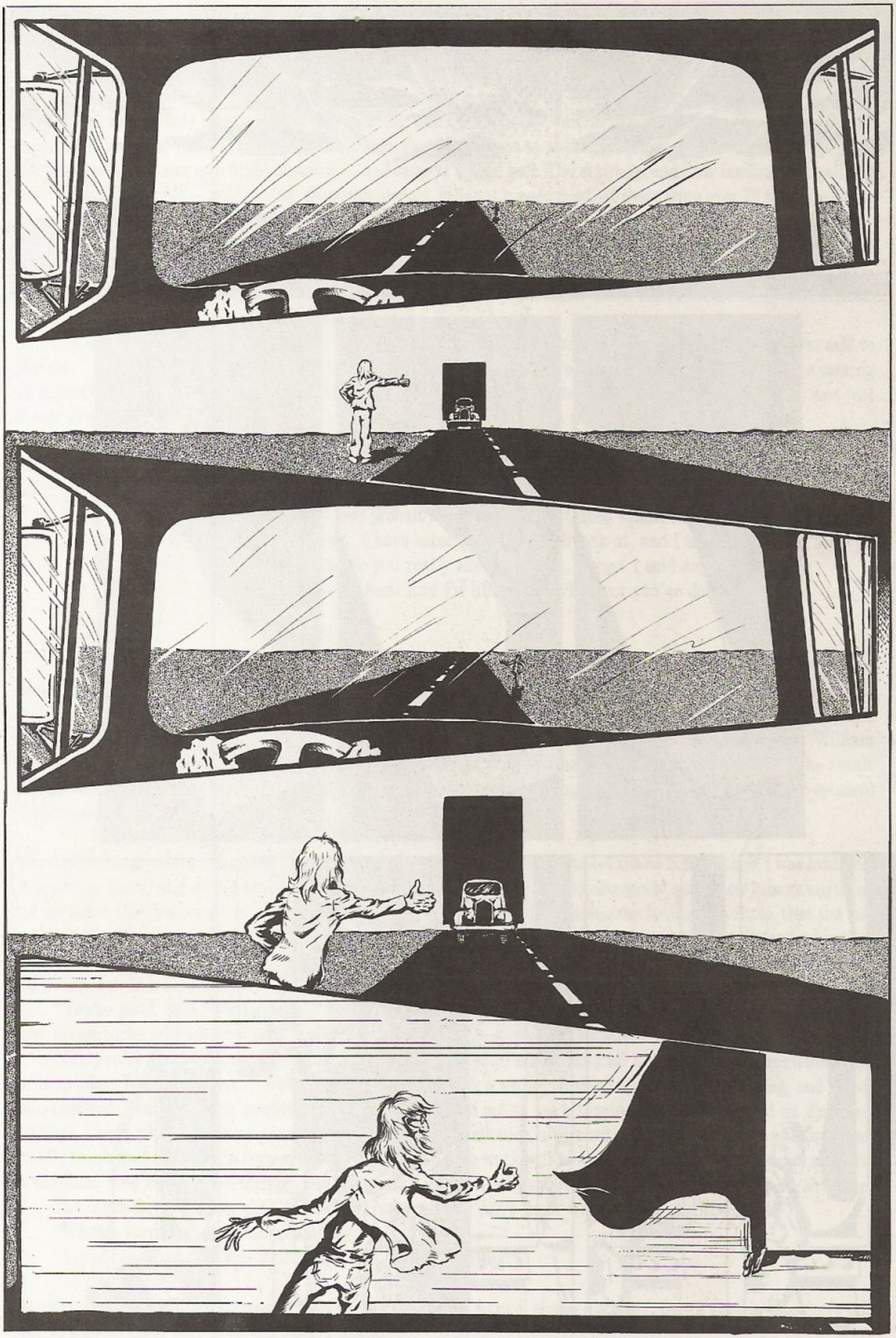
The other day he called me. "Hey, Bill. Guess what? I have more work than I can handle!"

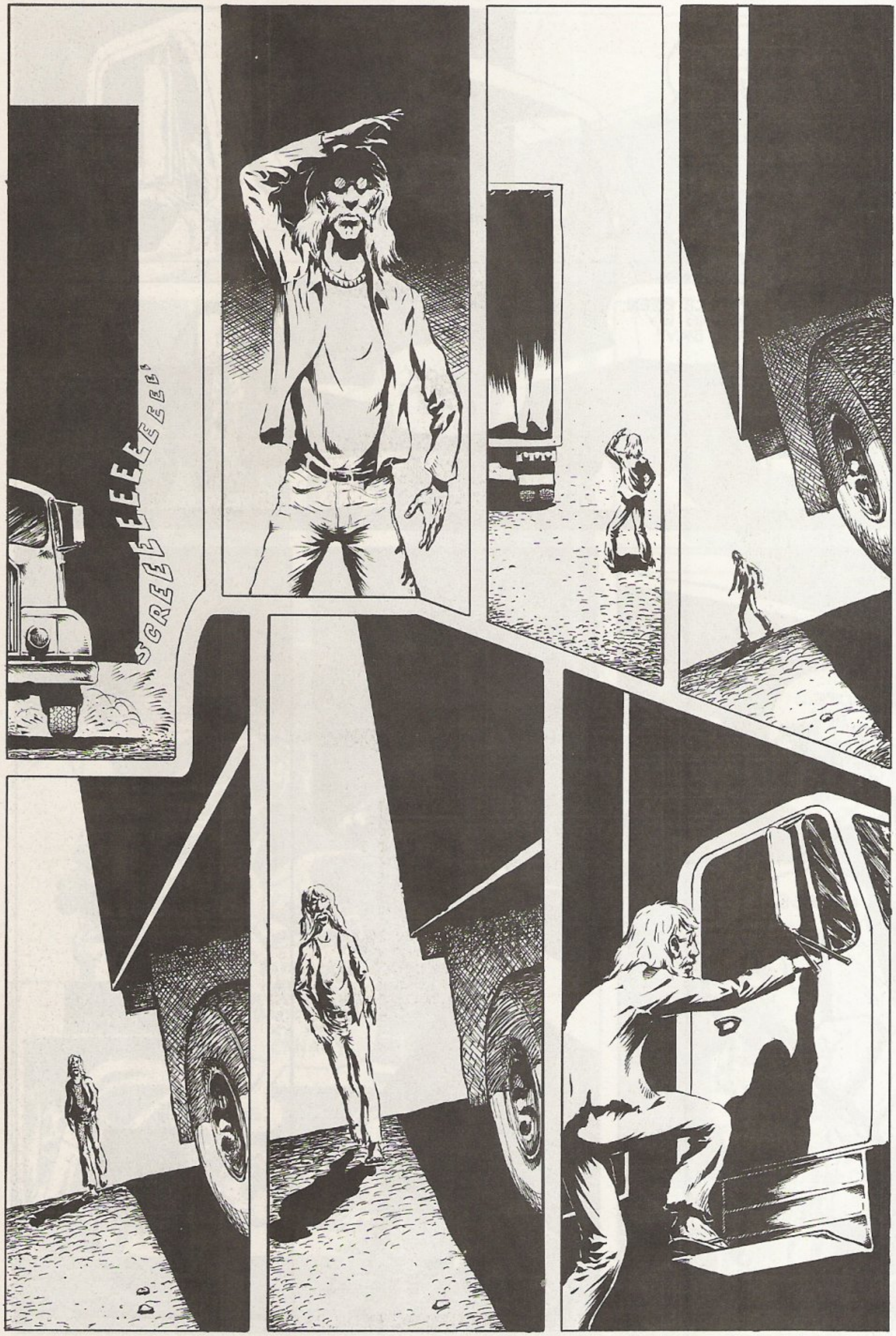
"What a surprise," I remarked, mildly.

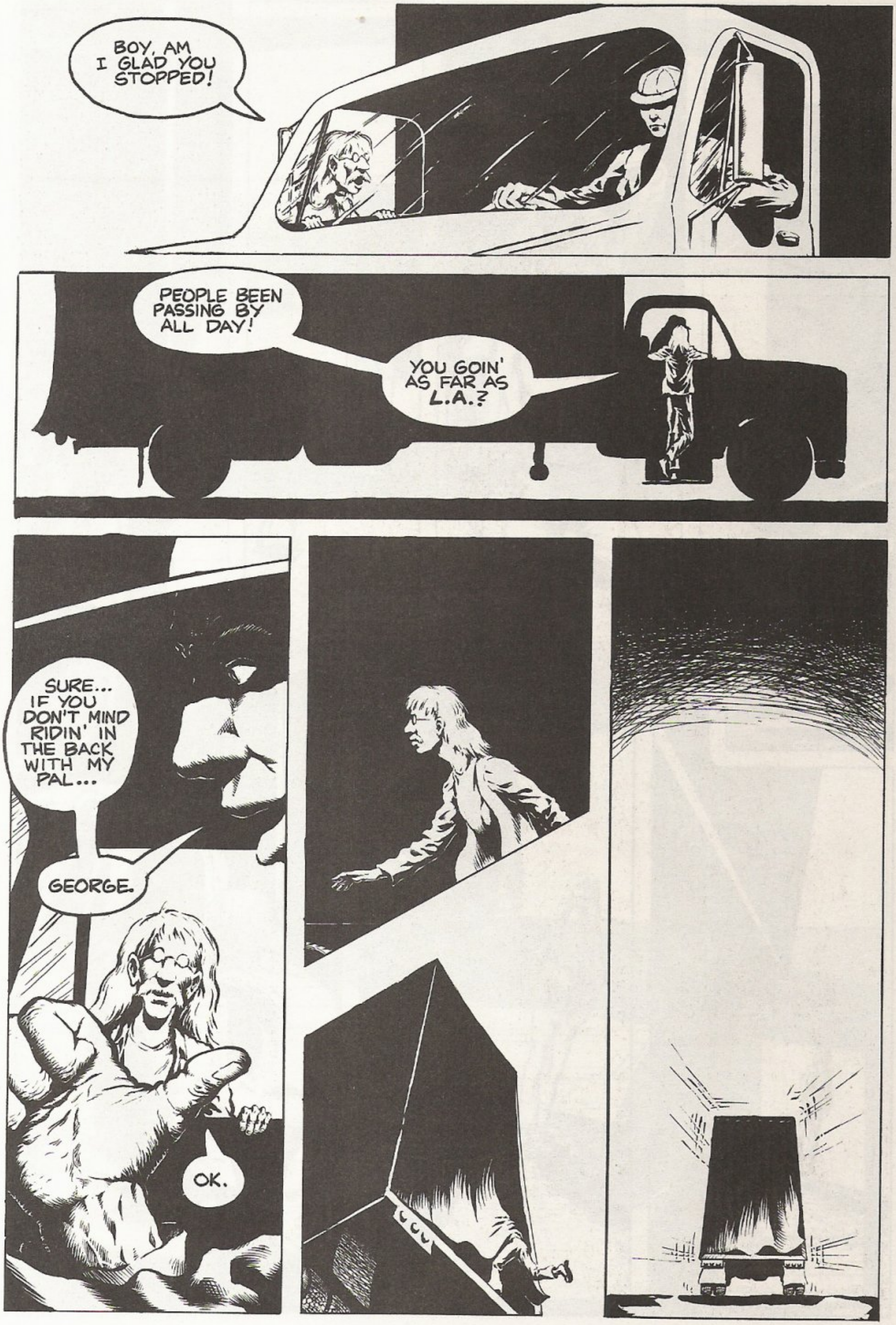
"Yeah, but what if I take it and they find out I'm terrible?"

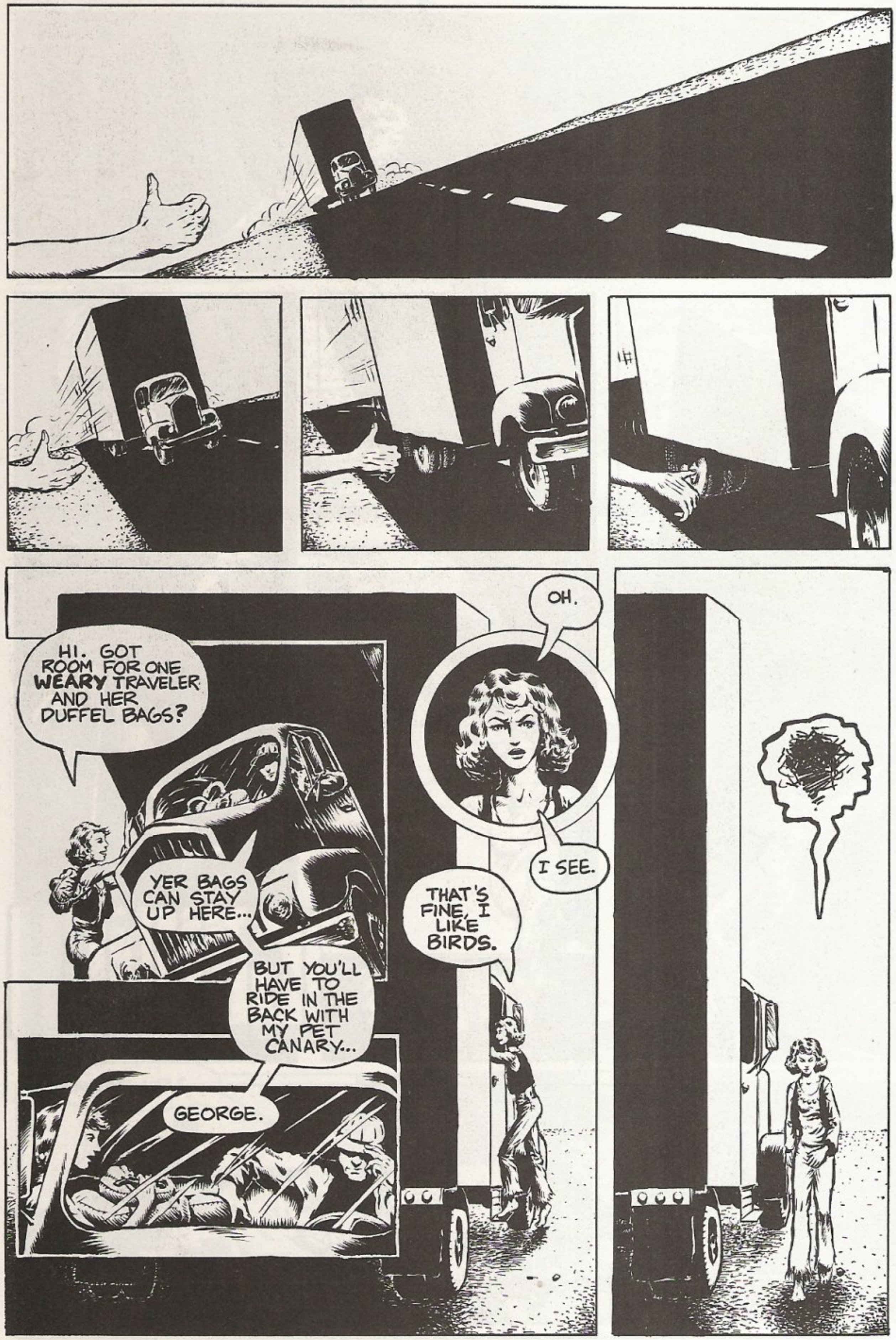
So when you see Sam at a convention, go up, get your book signed, shake his hand. Buy a sketch. But don't tell him he's good. He'll only give you an argument.

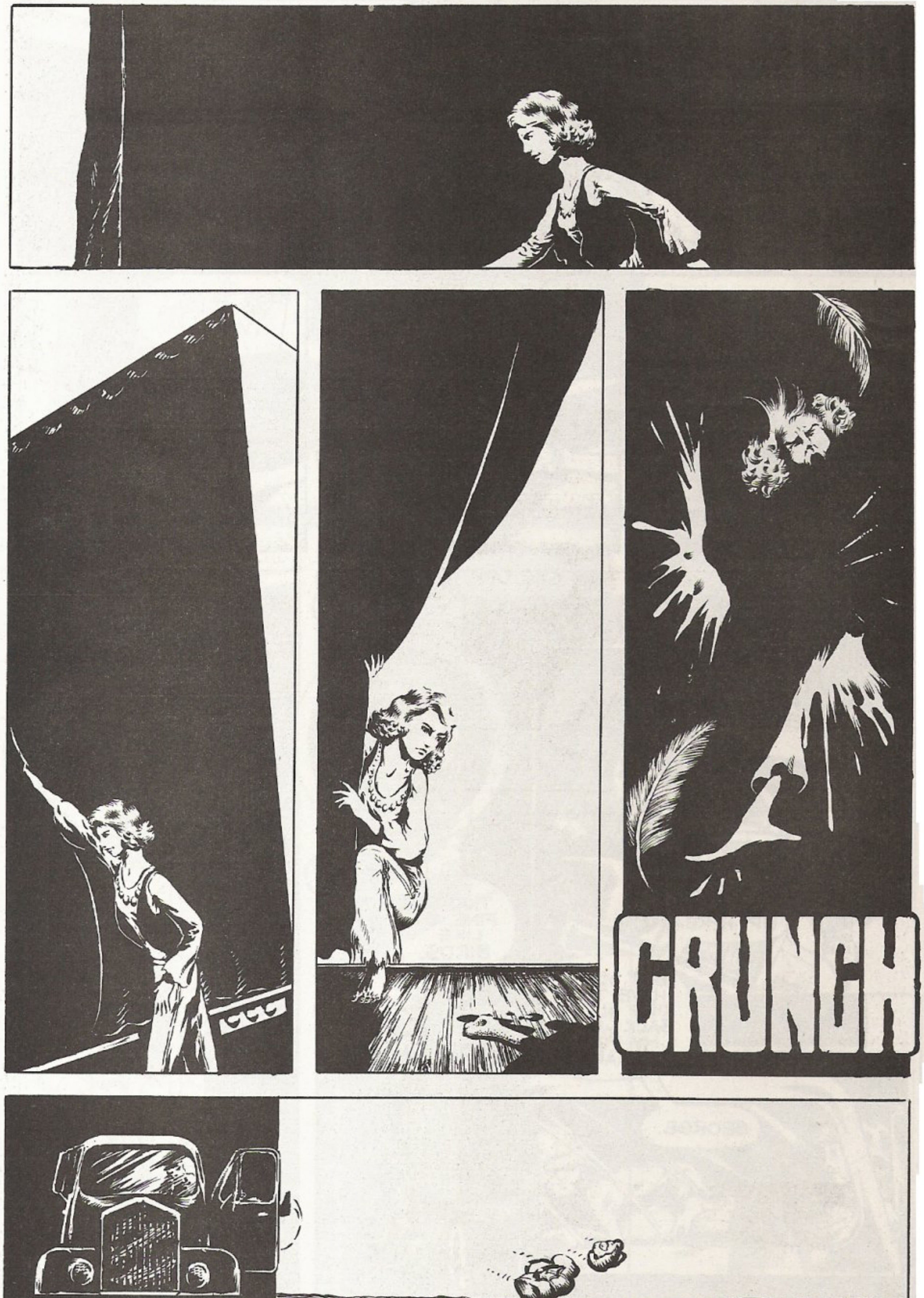

GEORGE
CLUMP

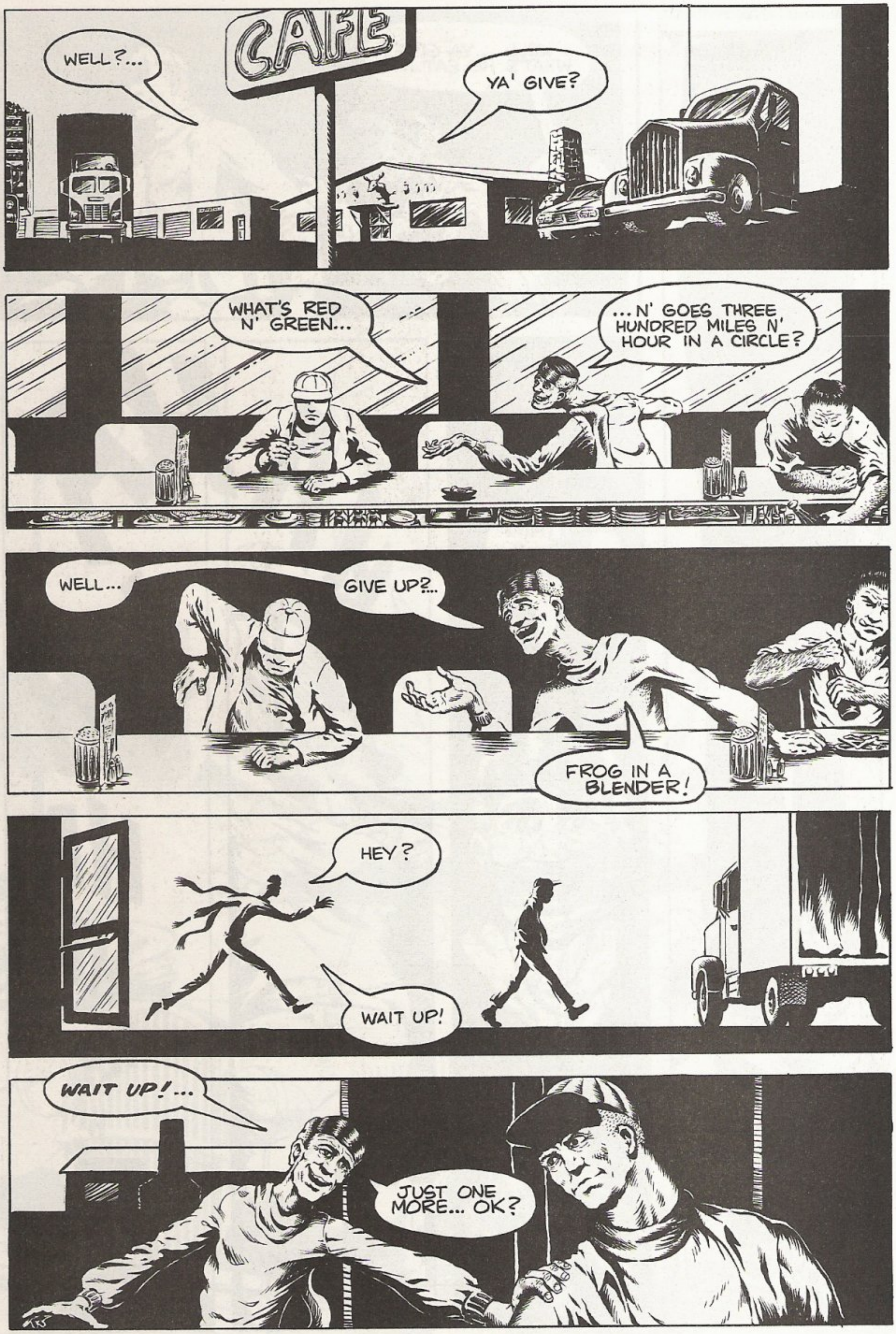


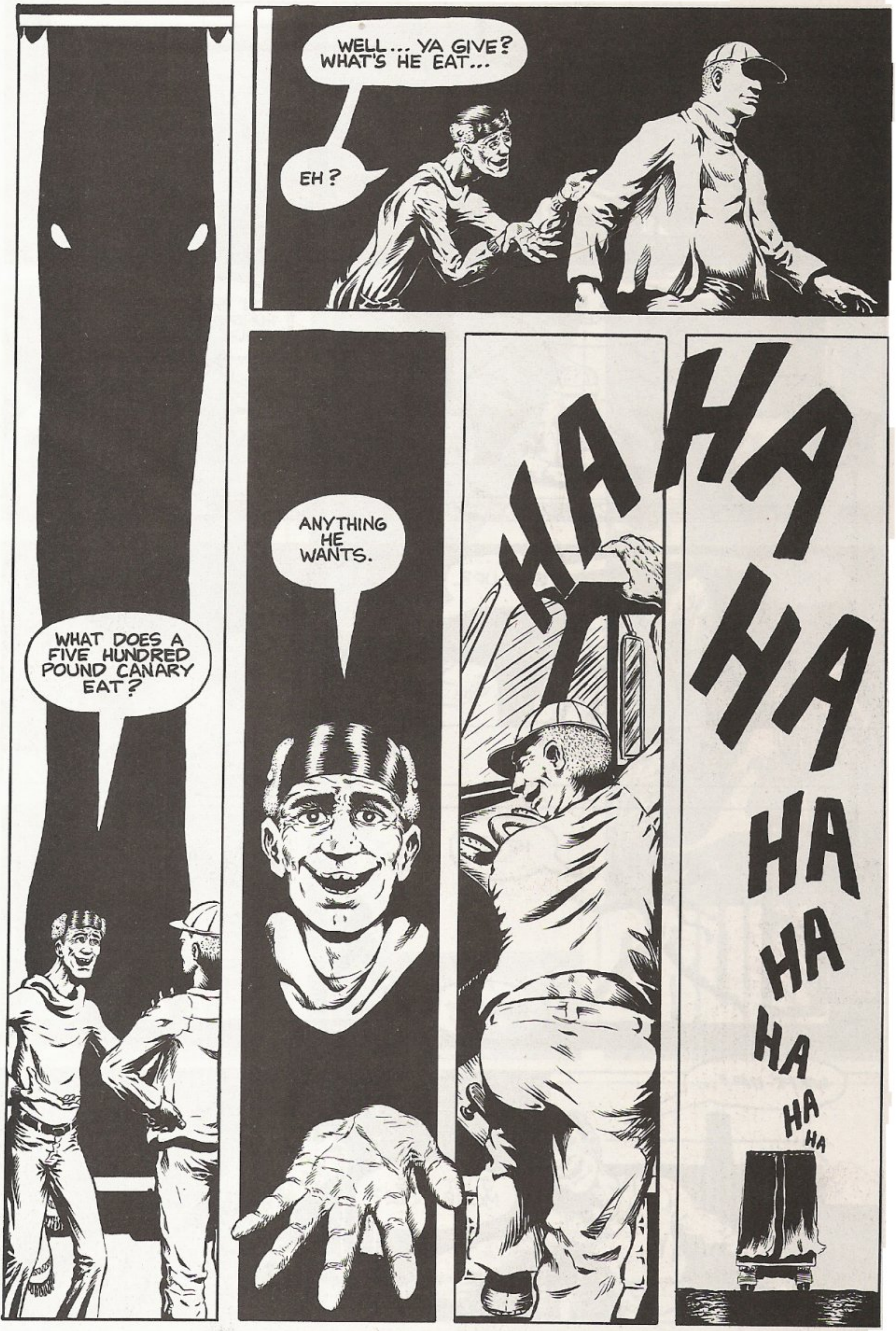

SCREEEEEEEEEEEE

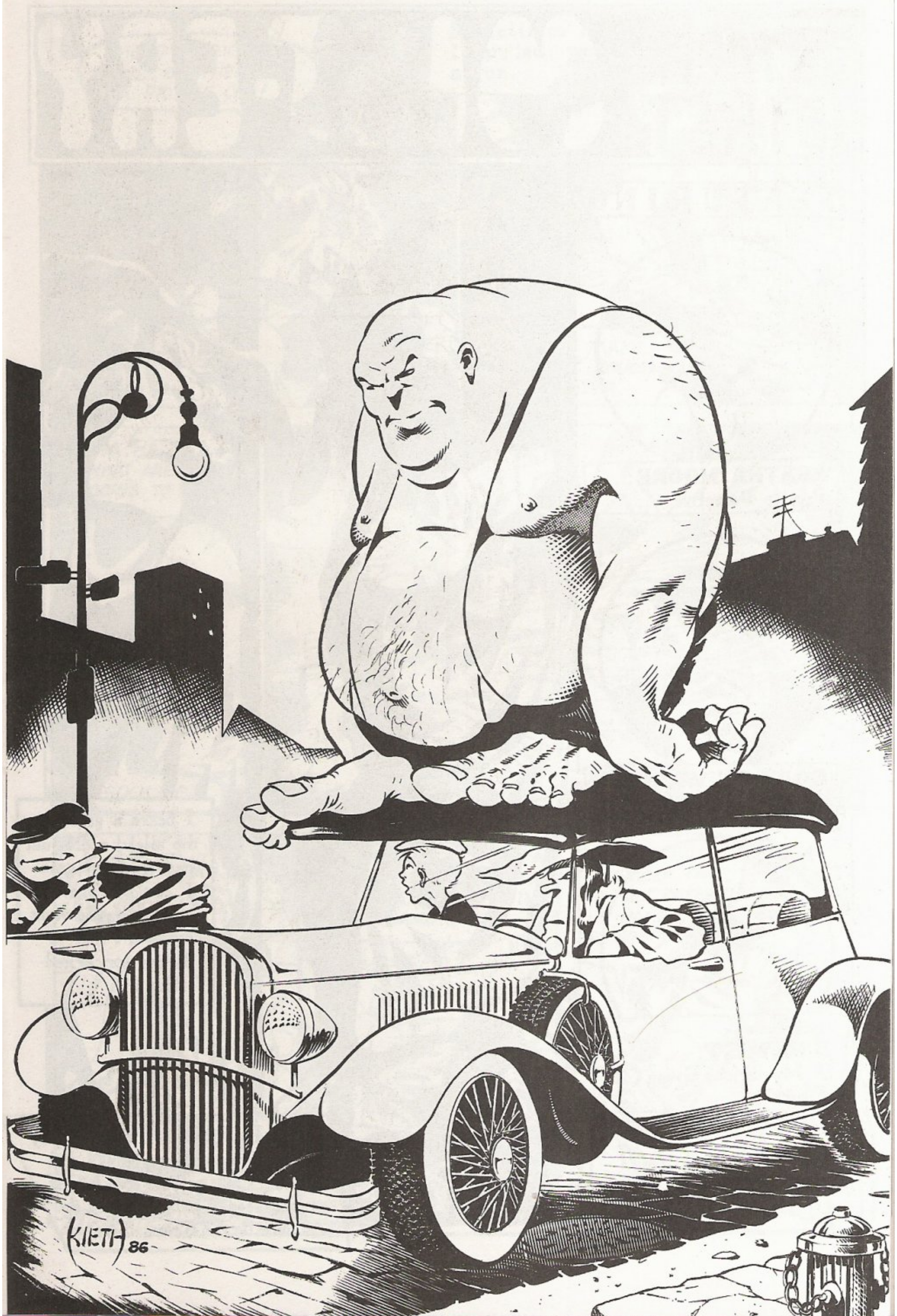

BOY, AM I GLAD YOU STOPPED!
PEOPLE BEEN PASSING BY ALL DAY!
YOU GOIN' AS FAR AS L.A.?
SURE... IF YOU DON'T MIND RIDIN' IN THE BACK WITH MY PAL...
GEORGE.
OK.


HI. GOT ROOM FOR ONE **WEARY** TRAVELER AND HER DUFFEL BAGS?
YER BAGS CAN STAY UP HERE...
BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO RIDE IN THE BACK WITH MY PET CANARY...
GEORGE.
OH.
I SEE.
THAT'S FINE, I LIKE BIRDS.


CRUNCH


CAFE
WELL?...
YA' GIVE?
WHAT'S RED N' GREEN...
...N' GOES THREE HUNDRED MILES N' HOUR IN A CIRCLE?
WELL...
GIVE UP?...
FROG IN A BLENDER!
HEY?
WAIT UP!
WAIT UP!...
JUST ONE MORE... OK?


WELL... YA GIVE? WHAT'S HE EAT...
EH?
WHAT DOES A FIVE HUNDRED POUND CANARY EAT?
ANYTHING HE WANTS.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA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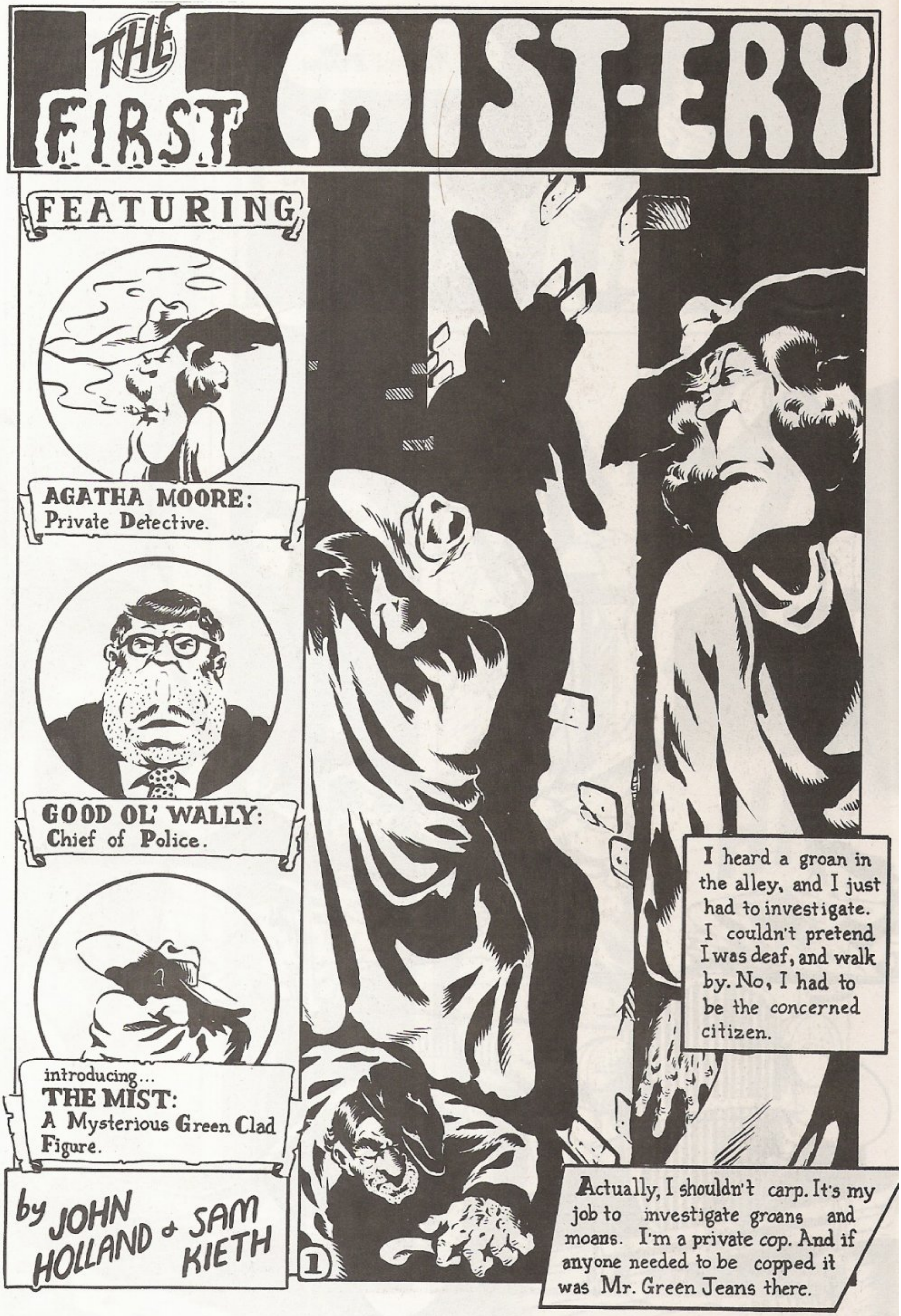
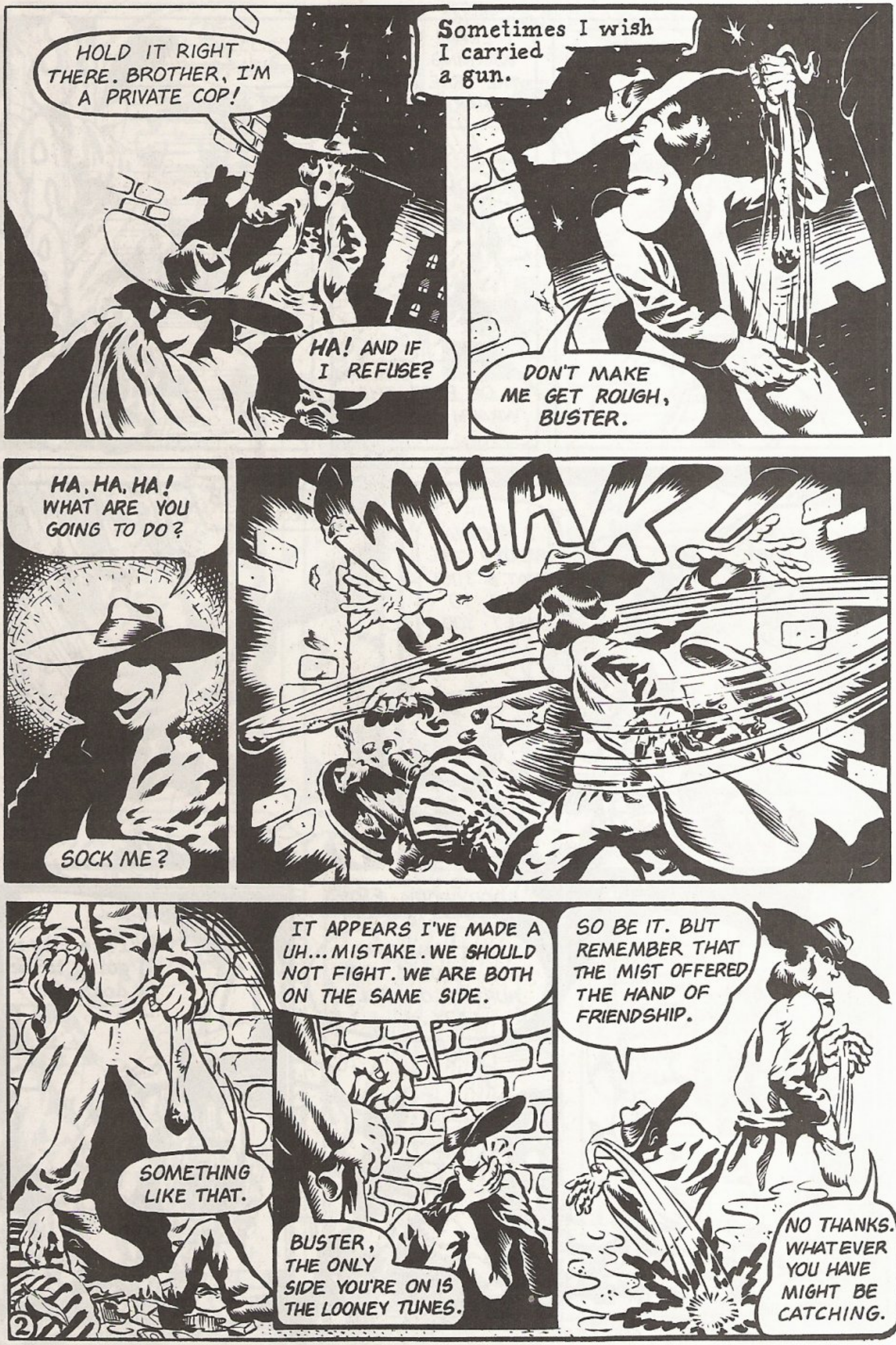
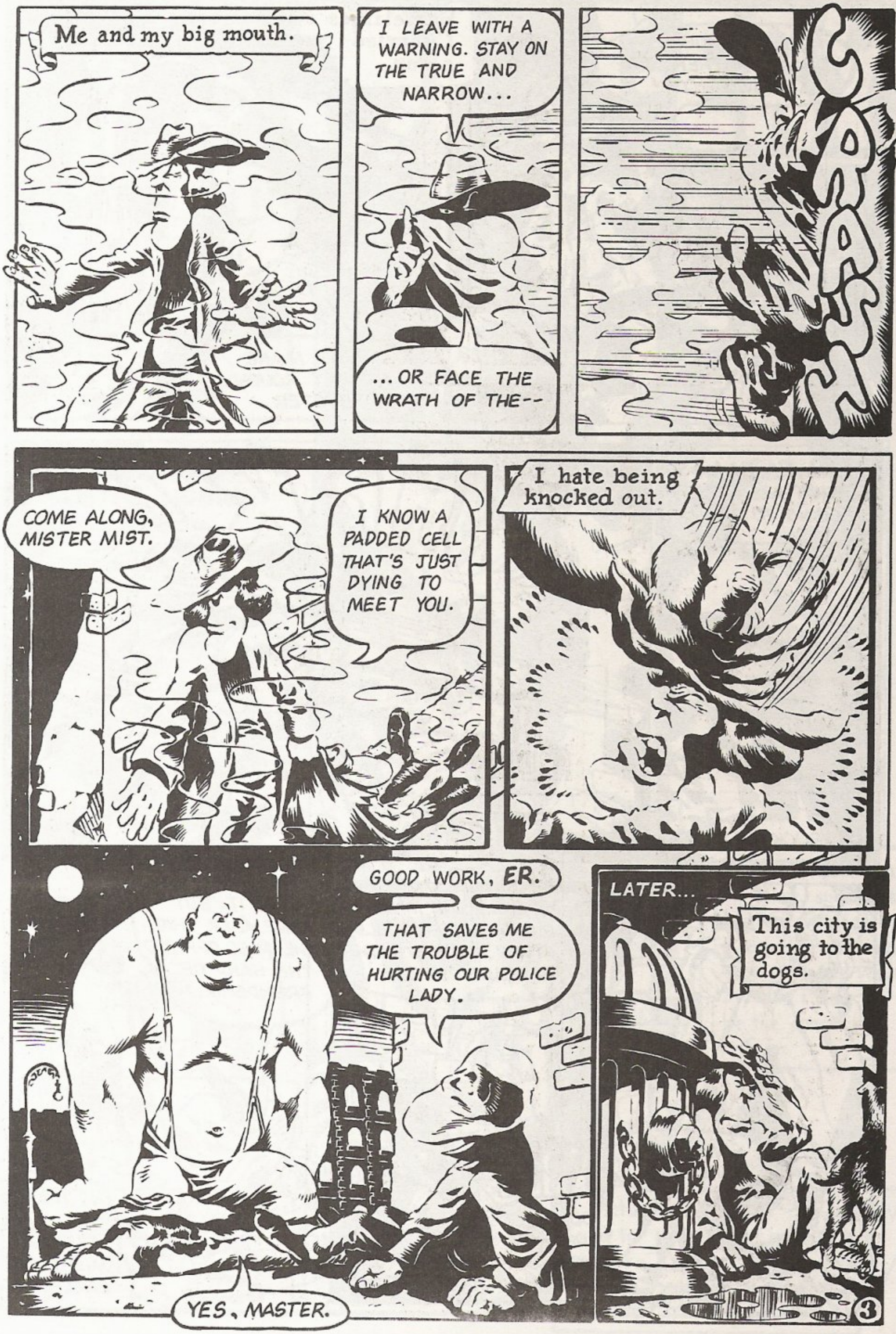
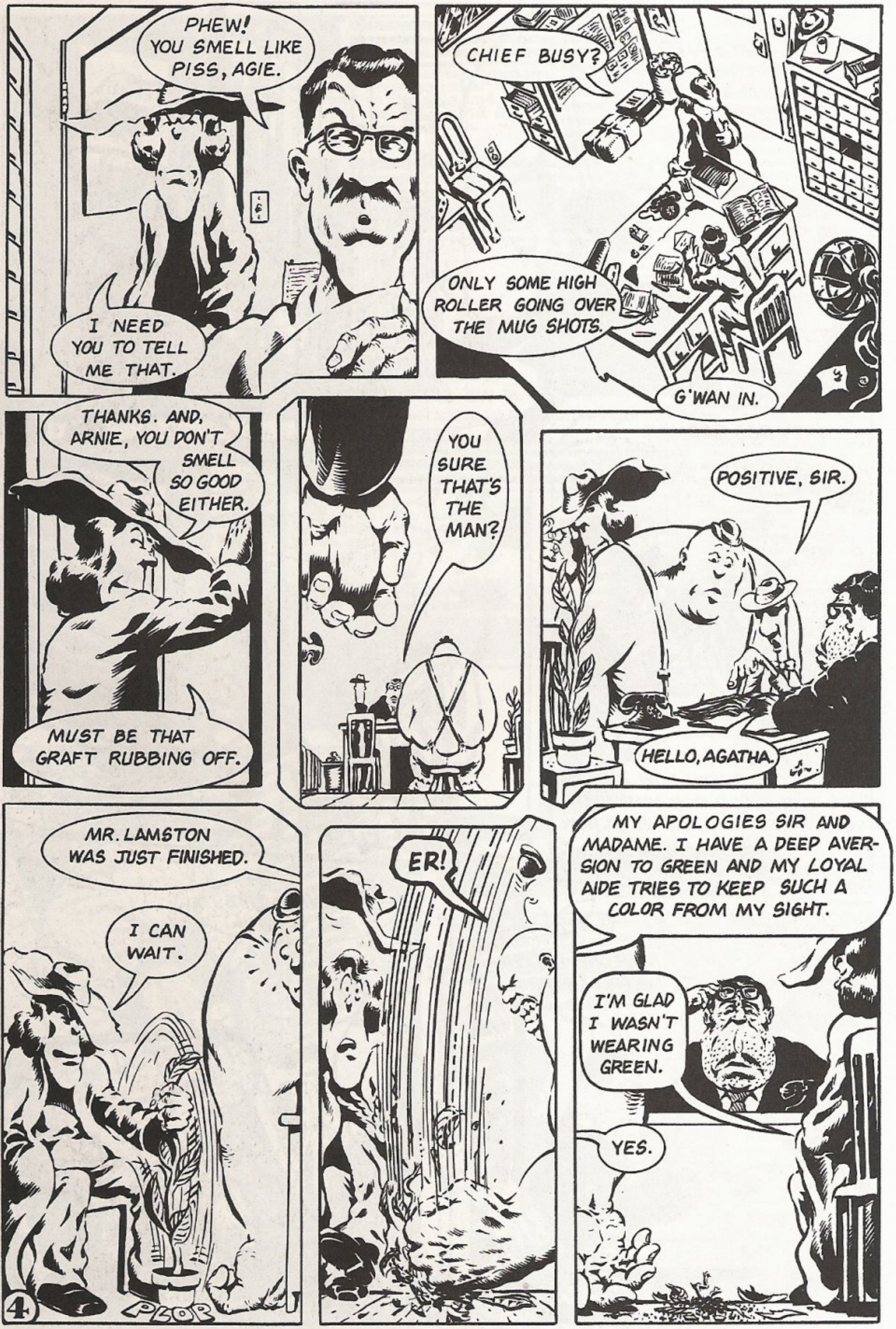
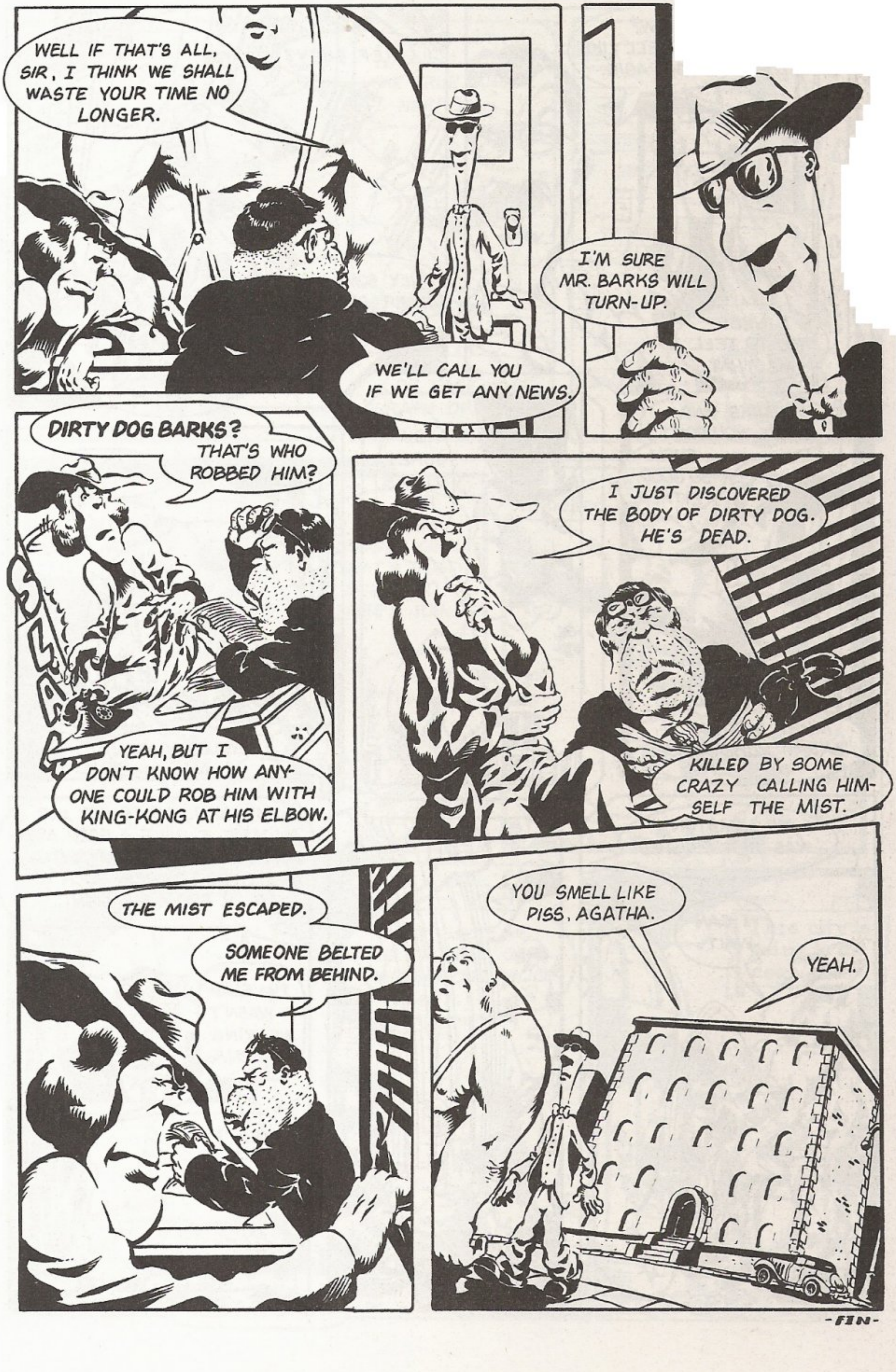
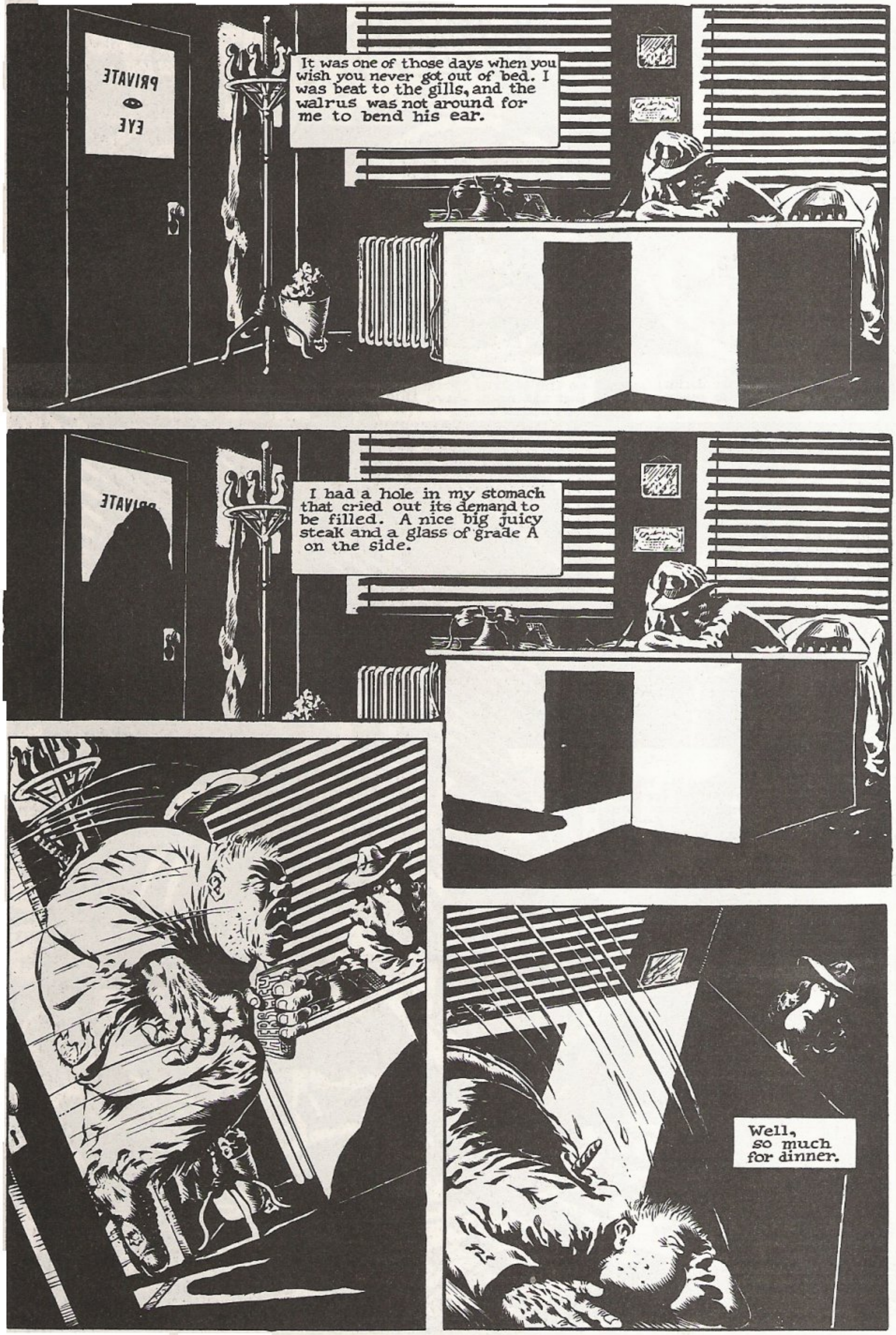

THE FIRST MIST-ERY
FEATURING
AGATHA MOORE: Private Detective.
GOOD OL' WALLY: Chief of Police.
introducing... THE MIST: A Mysterious Green Clad Figure.
by JOHN HOLLAND & SAM KIETH
1
I heard a groan in the alley, and I just had to investigate. I couldn't pretend I was deaf, and walk by. No, I had to be the concerned citizen.
Actually, I shouldn't carp. It's my job to investigate groans and moans. I'm a private cop. And if anyone needed to be copped it was Mr. Green Jeans there.

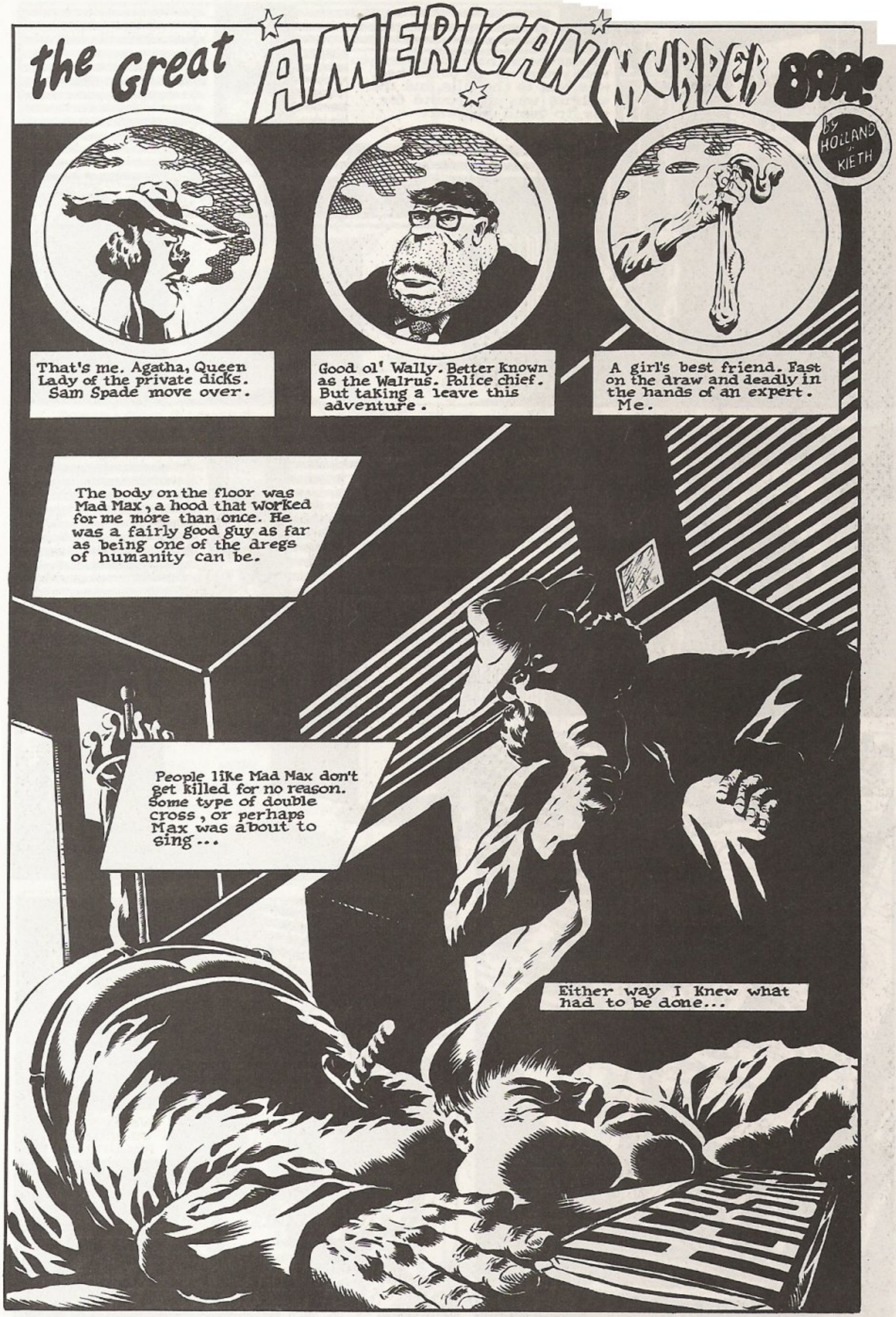

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE. BROTHER, I'M A PRIVATE COP!
HA! AND IF I REFUSE?
Sometimes I wish I carried a gun.
DON'T MAKE ME GET ROUGH, BUSTER.
HA, HA, HA! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
SOCK ME?
WHAK!
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
2
IT APPEARS I'VE MADE A UH... MISTAKE. WE SHOULD NOT FIGHT. WE ARE BOTH ON THE SAME SIDE.
BUSTER, THE ONLY SIDE YOU'RE ON IS THE LOONEY TUNES.
SO BE IT. BUT REMEMBER THAT THE MIST OFFERED THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP.
NO THANKS. WHATEVER YOU HAVE MIGHT BE CATCHING.

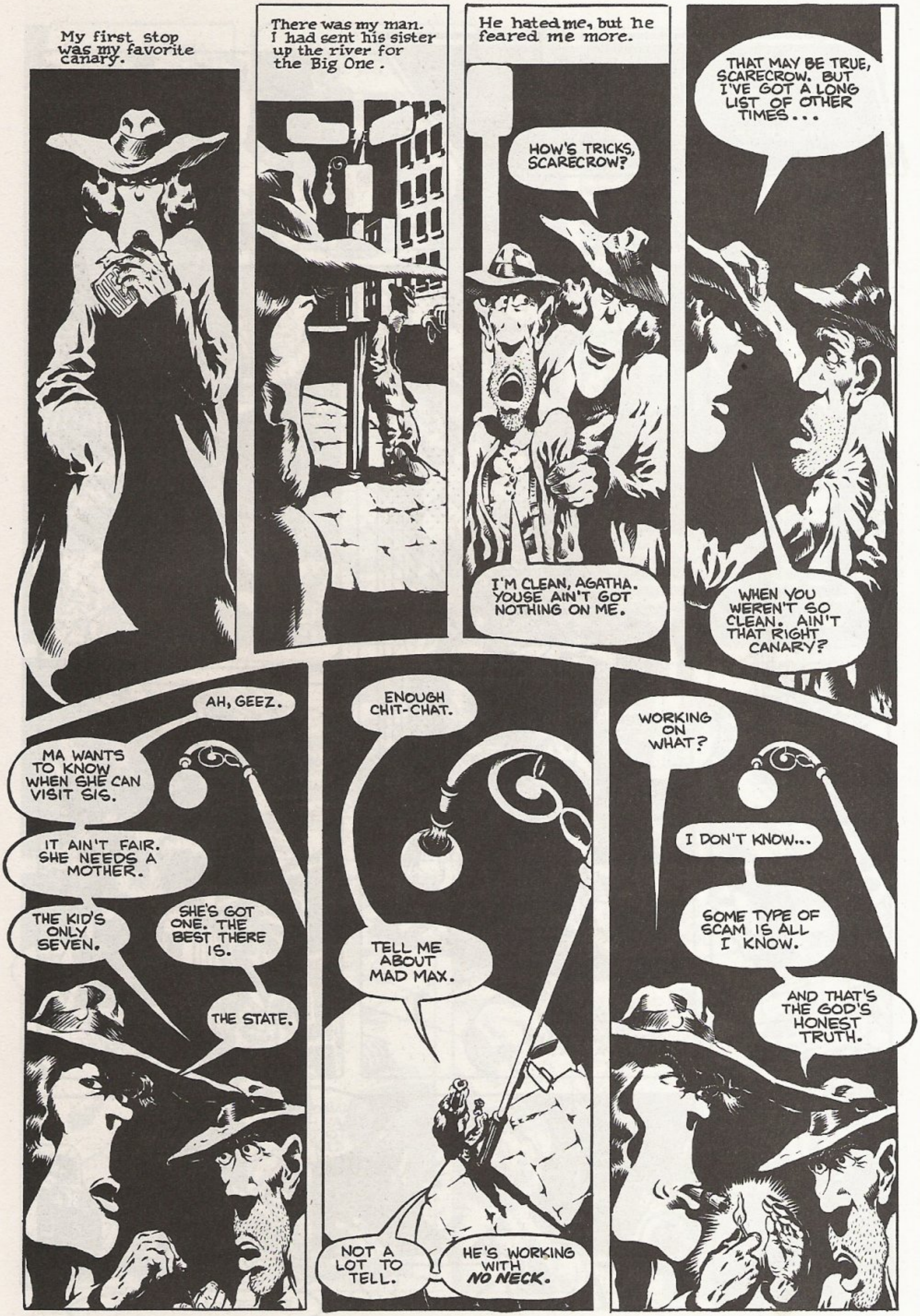

Me and my big mouth.
I LEAVE WITH A WARNING. STAY ON THE TRUE AND NARROW...
...OR FACE THE WRATH OF THE--
CRASH
COME ALONG, MISTER MIST.
I KNOW A PADDED CELL THAT'S JUST DYING TO MEET YOU.
I hate being knocked out.
GOOD WORK, ER.
THAT SAVES ME THE TROUBLE OF HURTING OUR POLICE LADY.
YES, MASTER.
LATER...
This city is going to the dogs.
3

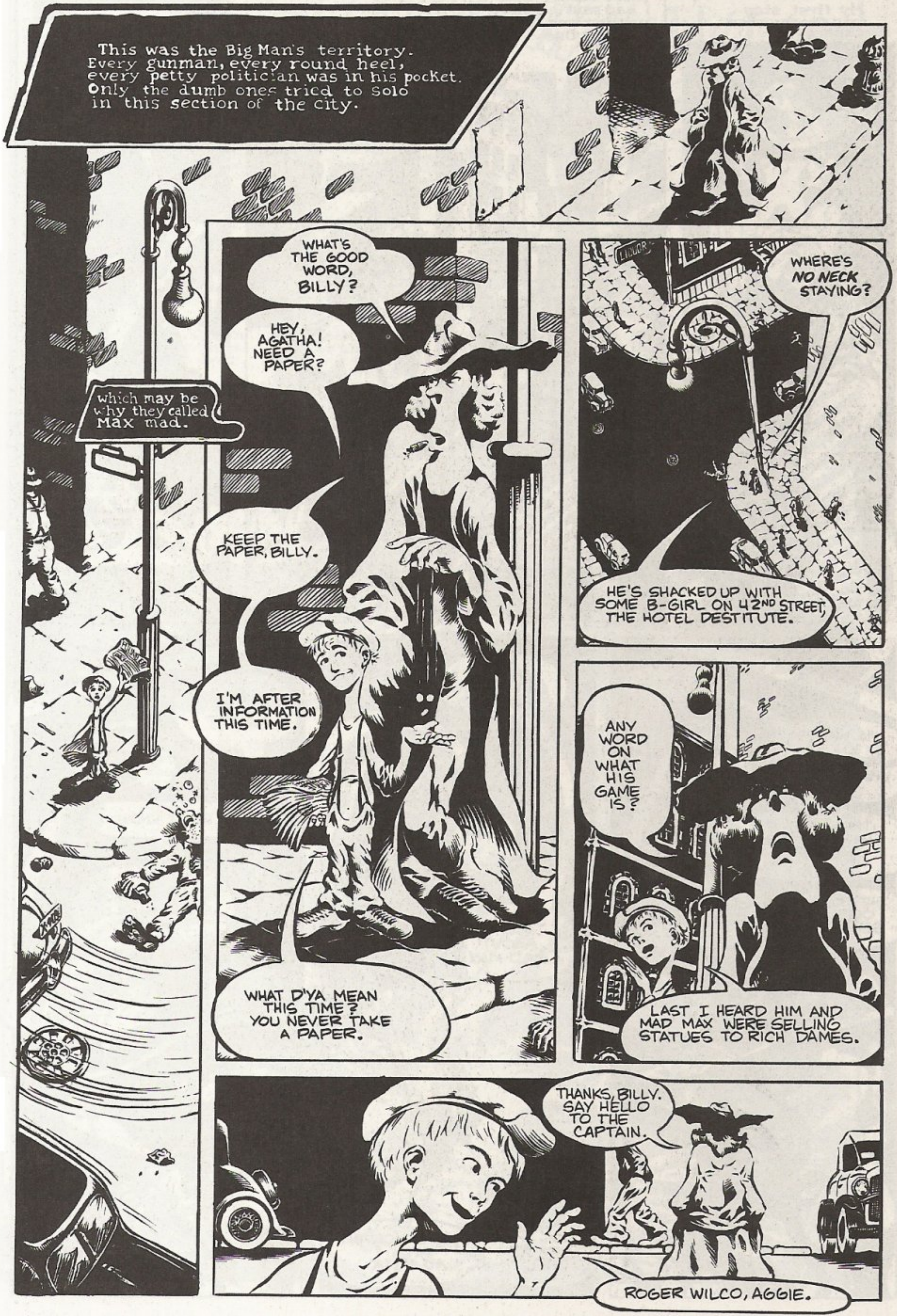

PHEW! YOU SMELL LIKE PISS, AGIE.
I NEED YOU TO TELL ME THAT.
CHIEF BUSY?
ONLY SOME HIGH ROLLER GOING OVER THE MUG SHOTS.
G'WAN IN.
THANKS. AND, ARNIE, YOU DON'T SMELL SO GOOD EITHER.
MUST BE THAT GRAFT RUBBING OFF.
YOU SURE THAT'S THE MAN?
POSITIVE, SIR.
HELLO, AGATHA.
MR. LAMSTON WAS JUST FINISHED.
I CAN WAIT.
4
PLOP
ER!
MY APOLOGIES SIR AND MADAME. I HAVE A DEEP AVERSION TO GREEN AND MY LOYAL AIDE TRIES TO KEEP SUCH A COLOR FROM MY SIGHT.
I'M GLAD I WASN'T WEARING GREEN.
YES.

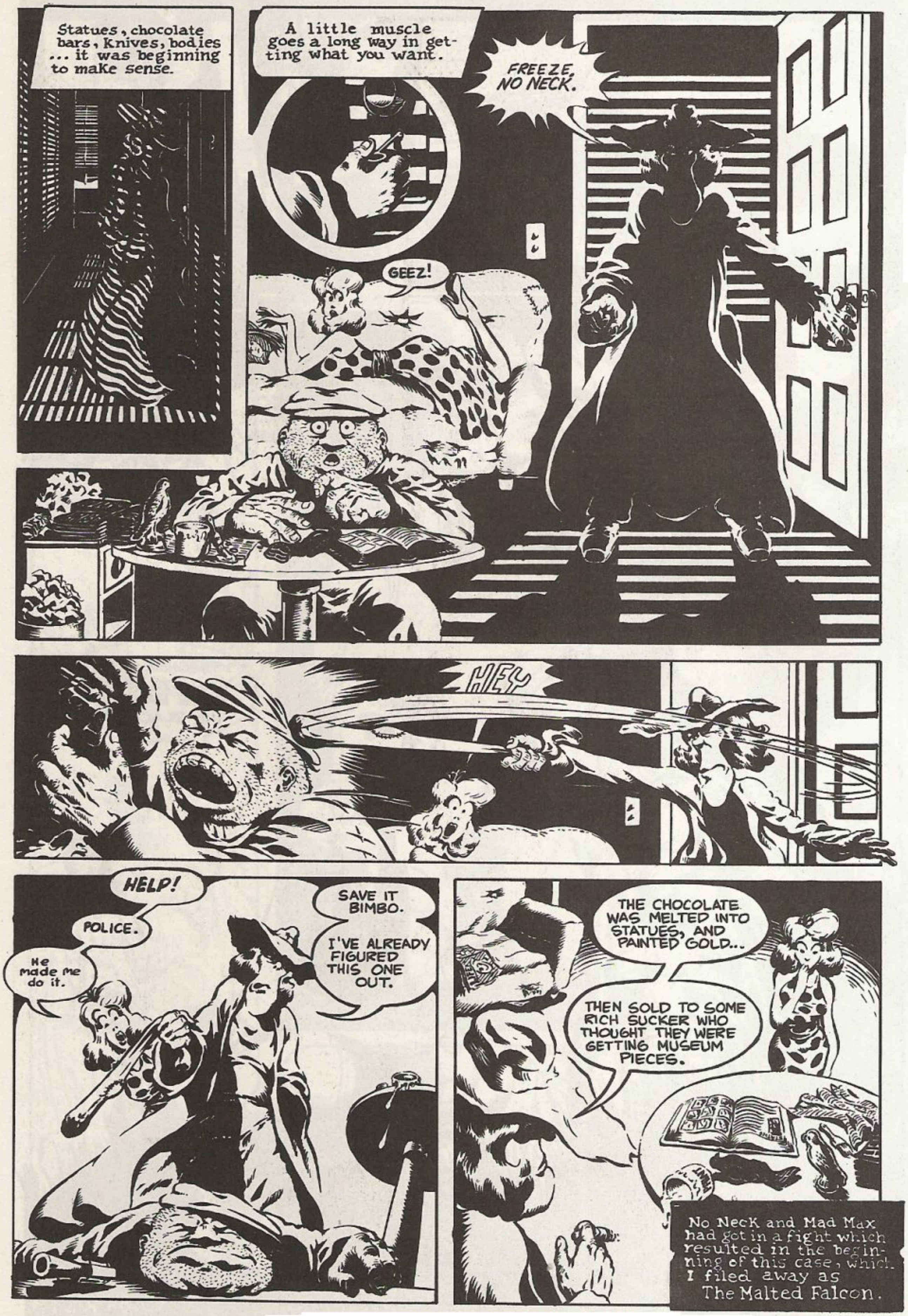

WELL IF THAT'S ALL, SIR, I THINK WE SHALL WASTE YOUR TIME NO LONGER.
WE'LL CALL YOU IF WE GET ANY NEWS.
I'M SURE MR. BARKS WILL TURN-UP.
DIRTY DOG BARKS? THAT'S WHO ROBBED HIM?
YEAH, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW ANYONE COULD ROB HIM WITH KING-KONG AT HIS ELBOW.
I JUST DISCOVERED THE BODY OF DIRTY DOG. HE'S DEAD.
KILLED BY SOME CRAZY CALLING HIMSELF THE MIST.
THE MIST ESCAPED.
SOMEONE BELTED ME FROM BEHIND.
YOU SMELL LIKE PISS, AGATHA.
YEAH.
-FIN-

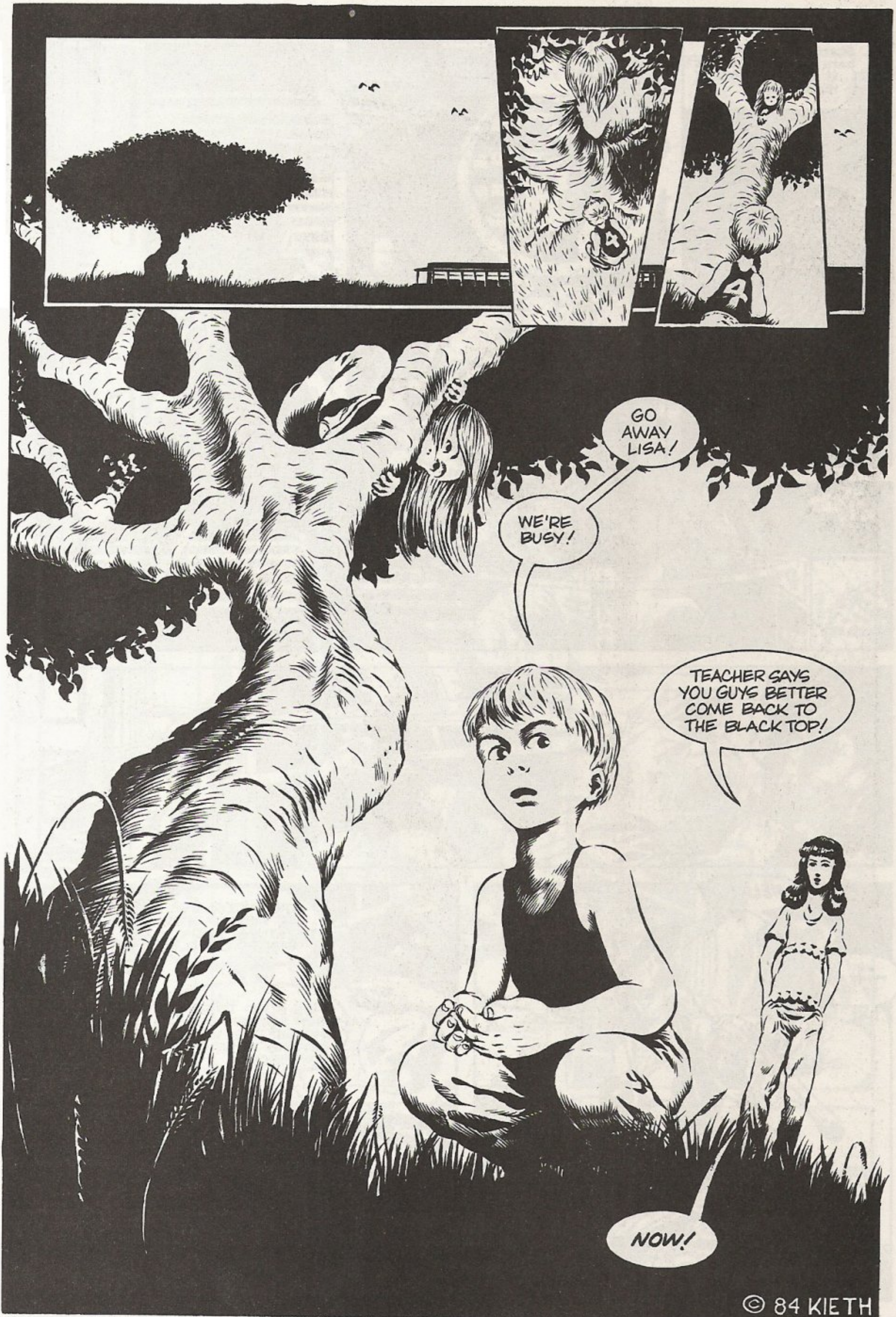

PRIVATE EYE
It was one of those days when you wish you never got out of bed. I was beat to the gills, and the walrus was not around for me to bend his ear.
I had a hole in my stomach that cried out its demand to be filled. A nice big juicy steak and a glass of grade A on the side.
Well, so much for dinner.

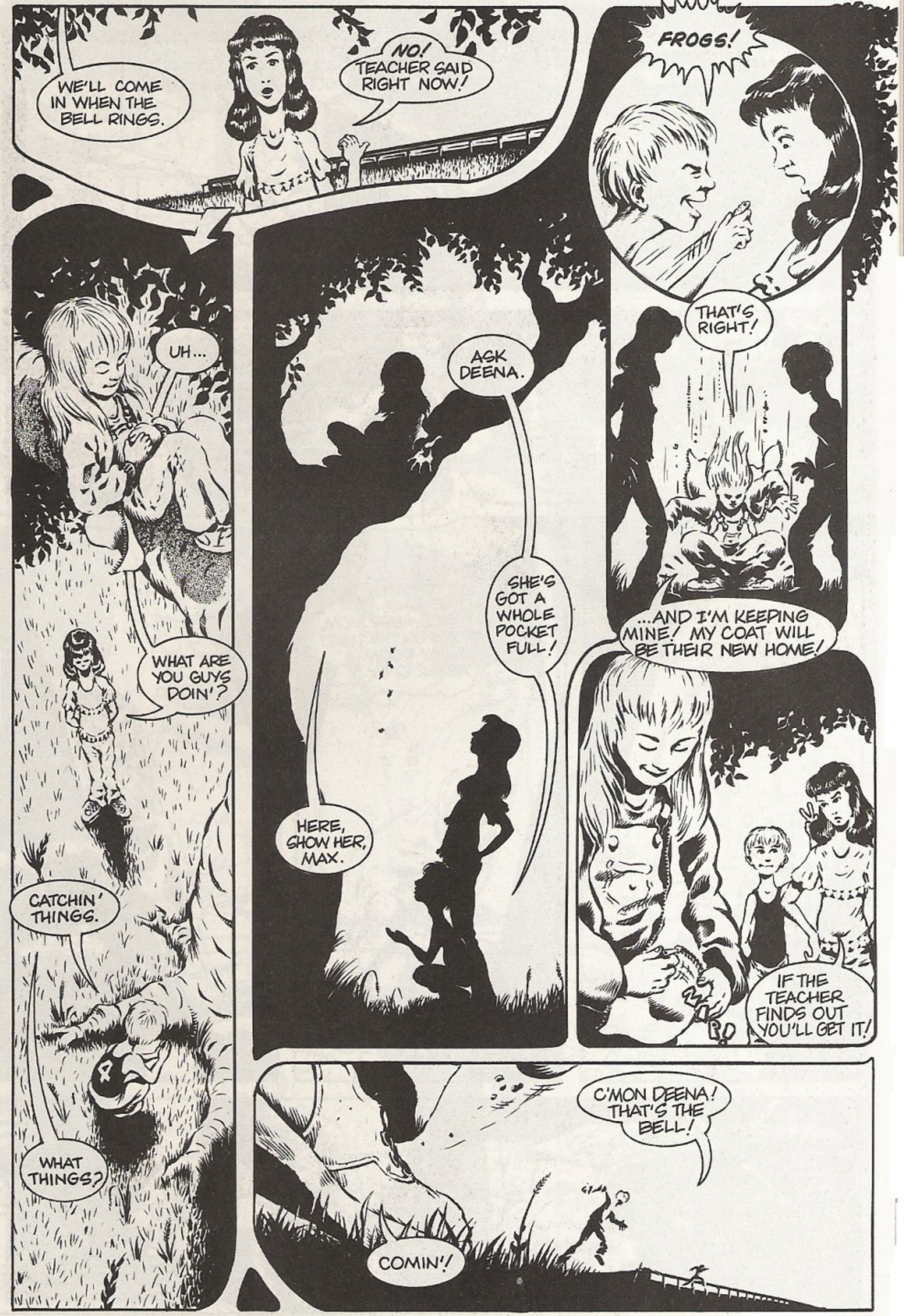

the Great AMERICAN MURDER BAR!
by HOLLAND KIETH
That's me. Agatha, Queen Lady of the private dicks. Sam Spade move over.
Good ol' Wally. Better known as the Walrus. Police chief. But taking a leave this adventure.
A girl's best friend. Fast on the draw and deadly in the hands of an expert. Me.
The body on the floor was Mad Max, a hood that worked for me more than once. He was a fairly good guy as far as being one of the dregs of humanity can be.
People like Mad Max don't get killed for no reason. Some type of double cross, or perhaps Max was about to sing...
Either way I knew what had to be done...

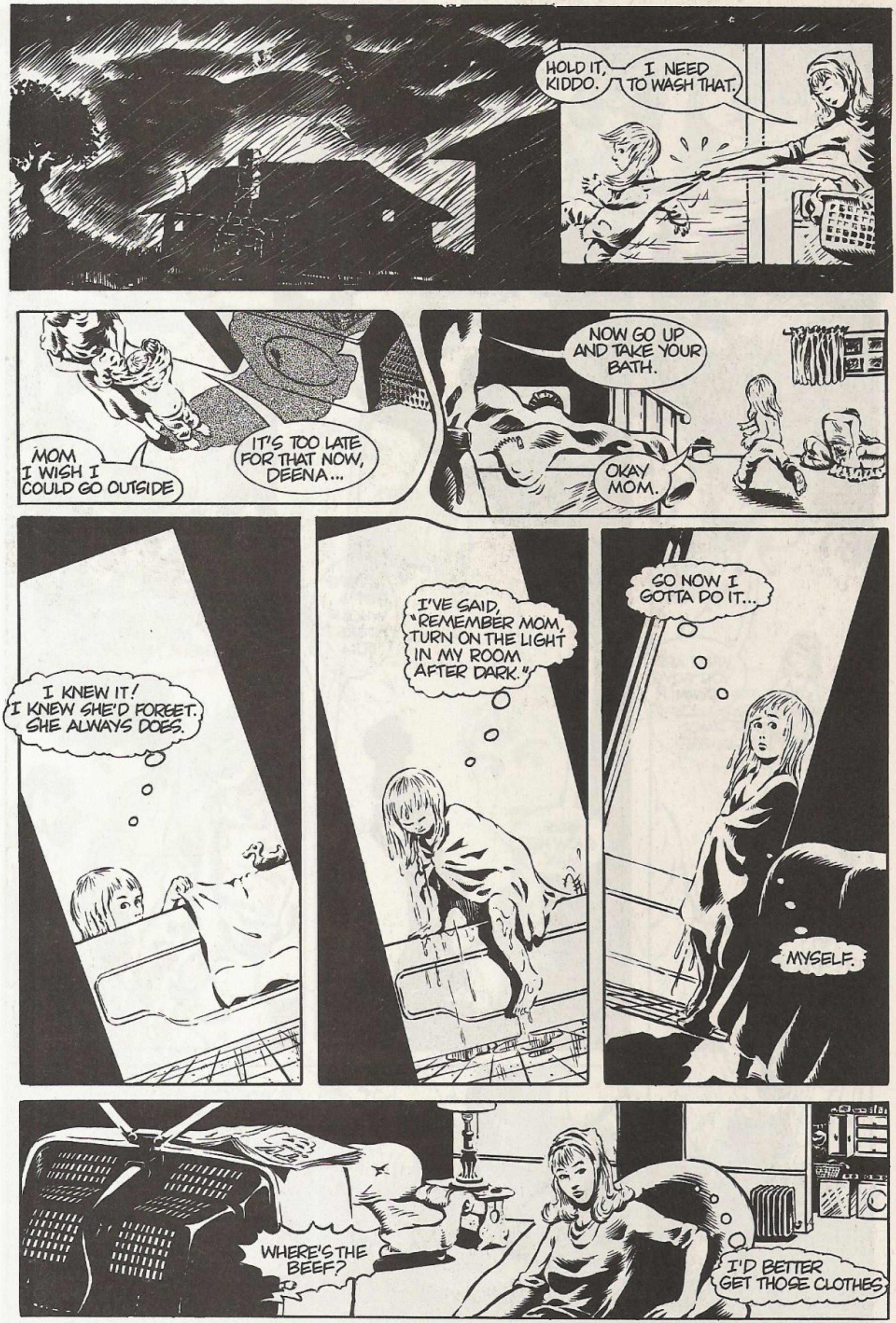

My first stop was my favorite canary.
There was my man. I had sent his sister up the river for the Big One.
He hated me, but he feared me more.
HOW'S TRICKS, SCARECROW?
I'M CLEAN, AGATHA. YOUSE AIN'T GOT NOTHING ON ME.
THAT MAY BE TRUE, SCARECROW. BUT I'VE GOT A LONG LIST OF OTHER TIMES...
WHEN YOU WEREN'T SO CLEAN. AIN'T THAT RIGHT CANARY?
AH, GEEZ.
MA WANTS TO KNOW WHEN SHE CAN VISIT SIS.
IT AIN'T FAIR. SHE NEEDS A MOTHER.
THE KID'S ONLY SEVEN.
SHE'S GOT ONE. THE BEST THERE IS.
THE STATE.
ENOUGH CHIT-CHAT.
TELL ME ABOUT MAD MAX.
NOT A LOT TO TELL.
HE'S WORKING WITH NO NECK.
WORKING ON WHAT?
I DON'T KNOW...
SOME TYPE OF SCAM IS ALL I KNOW.
AND THAT'S THE GOD'S HONEST TRUTH.

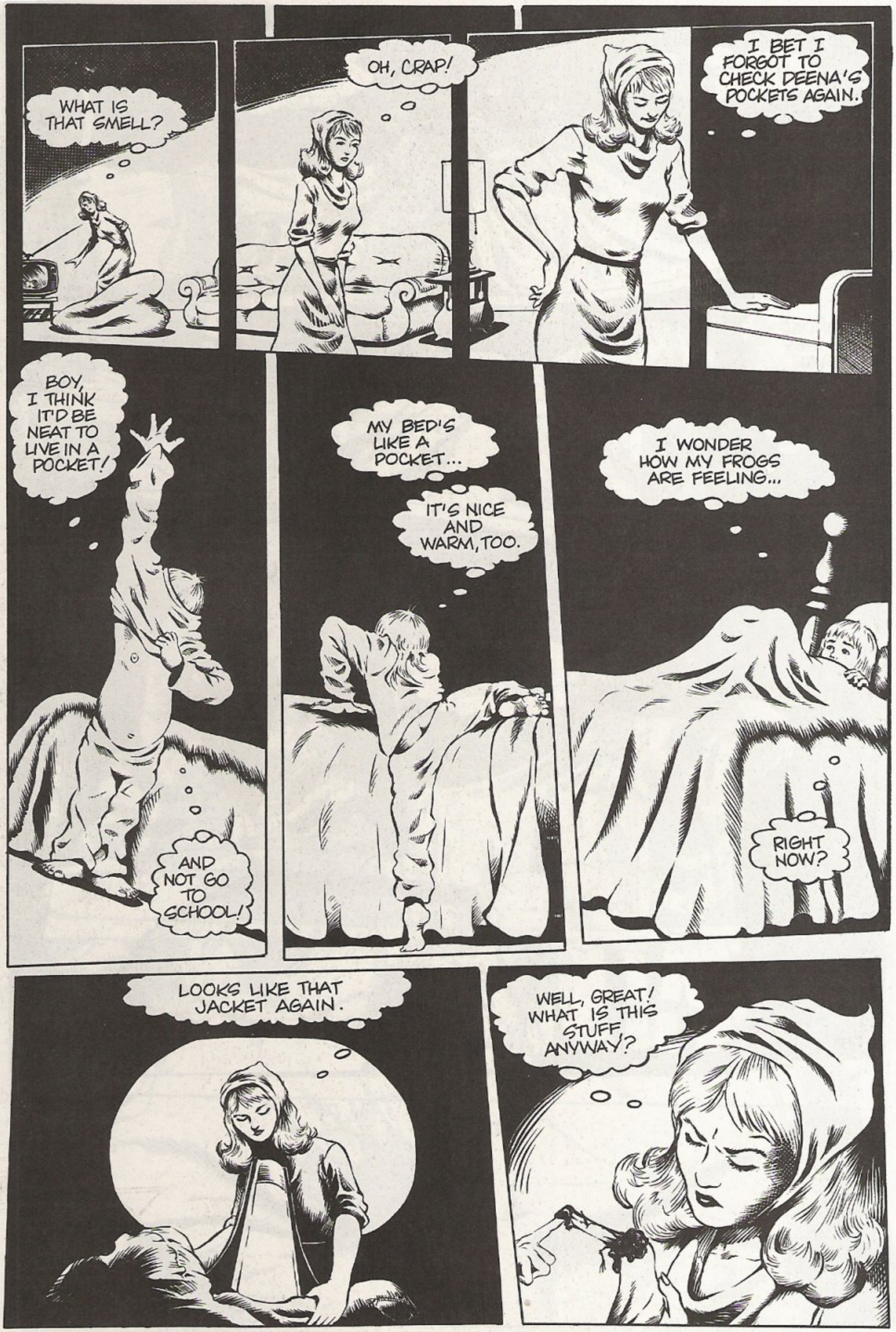

This was the Big Man's territory. Every gunman, every round heel, every petty politician was in his pocket. Only the dumb ones tried to solo in this section of the city.
which may be why they called Max mad.
WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD, BILLY?
HEY, AGATHA! NEED A PAPER?
KEEP THE PAPER, BILLY.
I'M AFTER INFORMATION THIS TIME.
WHAT D'YA MEAN THIS TIME? YOU NEVER TAKE A PAPER.
LIQUOR
WHERE'S *NO NECK* STAYING?
HE'S SHACKED UP WITH SOME B-GIRL ON 42ND STREET, THE HOTEL DESTITUTE.
ANY WORD ON WHAT HIS GAME IS?
LAST I HEARD HIM AND MAD MAX WERE SELLING STATUES TO RICH DAMES.
THANKS, BILLY. SAY HELLO TO THE CAPTAIN.
ROGER WILCO, AGGIE.

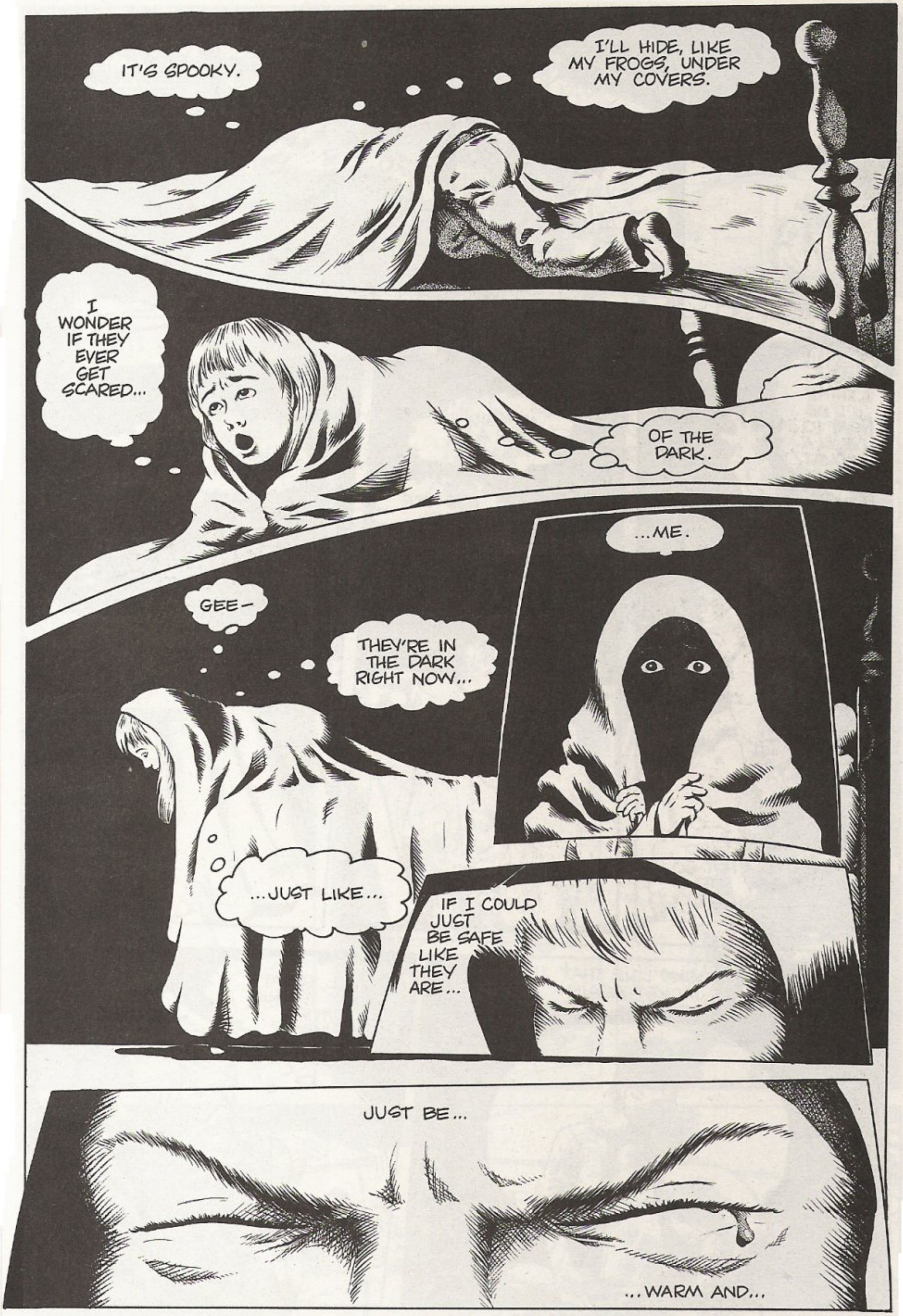

Statues, chocolate bars, Knives, bodies ... it was beginning to make sense.
A little muscle goes a long way in getting what you want.
FREEZE, NO NECK.
GEEZ!
HEY
HELP!
POLICE.
He made me do it.
SAVE IT BIMBO.
I'VE ALREADY FIGURED THIS ONE OUT.
THE CHOCOLATE WAS MELTED INTO STATUES, AND PAINTED GOLD...
THEN SOLD TO SOME RICH SUCKER WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE GETTING MUSEUM PIECES.
No Neck and Mad Max had got in a fight which resulted in the beginning of this case, which I filed away as The Malted Falcon.

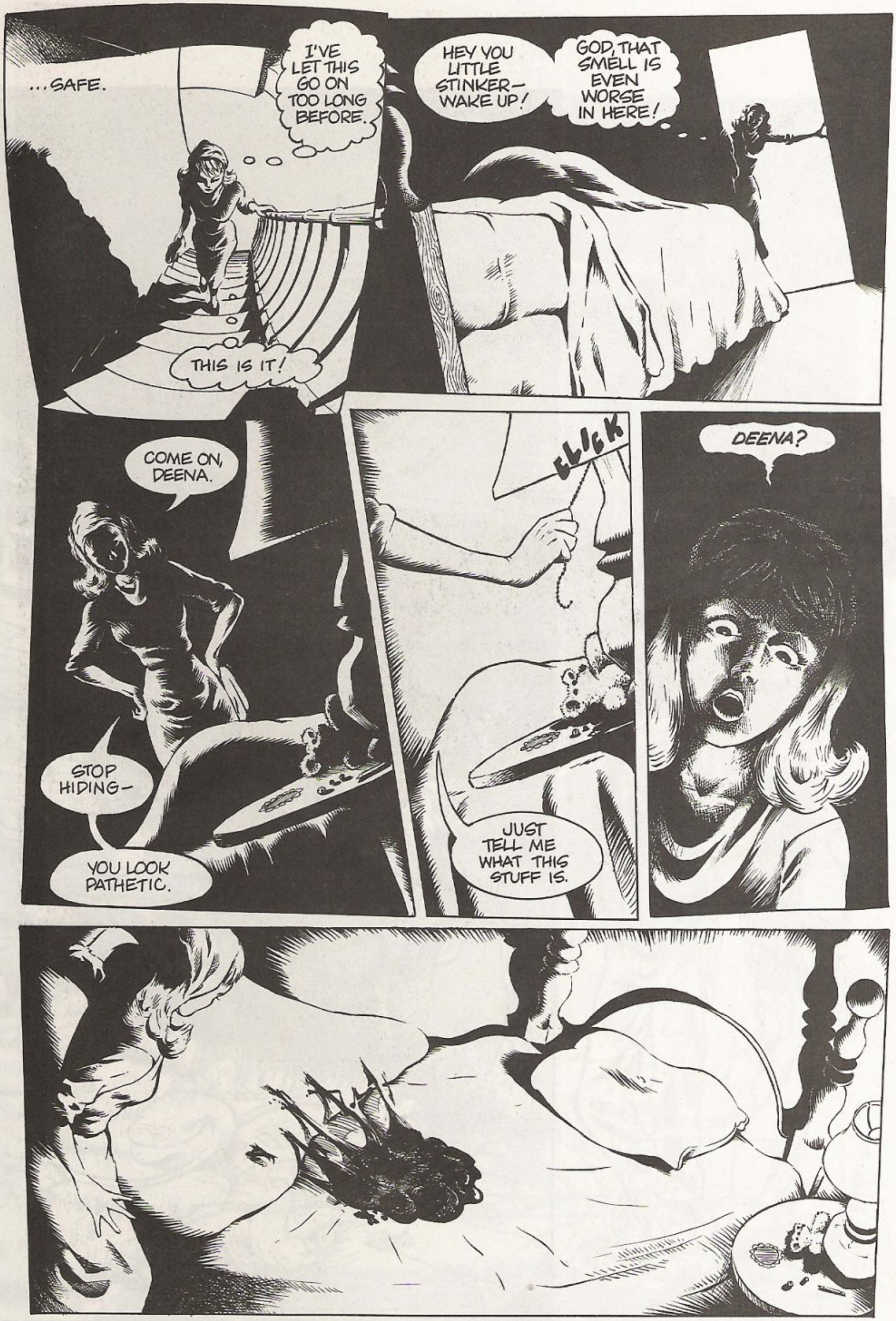

GO AWAY LISA!
WE'RE BUSY!
TEACHER SAYS YOU GUYS BETTER COME BACK TO THE BLACK TOP!
NOW!
© 84 KIETH


WE'LL COME IN WHEN THE BELL RINGS.
NO! TEACHER SAID RIGHT NOW!
FROGS!
UH...
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOIN'?
CATCHIN' THINGS.
WHAT THINGS?
ASK DEENA.
SHE'S GOT A WHOLE POCKET FULL!
HERE, SHOW HER, MAX.
THAT'S RIGHT!
...AND I'M KEEPING MINE! MY COAT WILL BE THEIR NEW HOME!
IF THE TEACHER FINDS OUT YOU'LL GET IT!
C'MON DEENA! THAT'S THE BELL!
COMIN'!


HOLD IT, KIDDO.
I NEED TO WASH THAT.
MOM I WISH I COULD GO OUTSIDE
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT NOW, DEENA...
NOW GO UP AND TAKE YOUR BATH.
OKAY MOM.
I KNEW IT! I KNEW SHE'D FORGET. SHE ALWAYS DOES.
I'VE SAID, "REMEMBER MOM, TURN ON THE LIGHT IN MY ROOM AFTER DARK."
SO NOW I GOTTA DO IT...
MYSELF.
WHERE'S THE BEEF?
I'D BETTER GET THOSE CLOTHES.

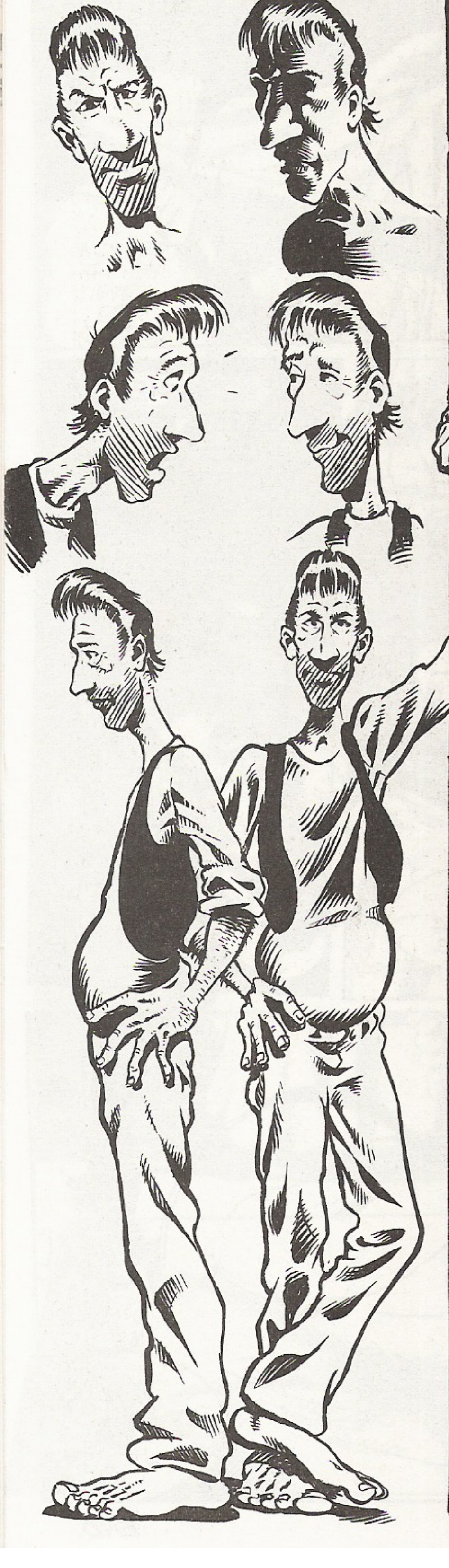

WHAT IS THAT SMELL?
OH, CRAP!
I BET I FORGOT TO CHECK DEENA'S POCKETS AGAIN.
BOY, I THINK IT'D BE NEAT TO LIVE IN A POCKET!
AND NOT GO TO SCHOOL!
MY BED'S LIKE A POCKET...
IT'S NICE AND WARM, TOO.
I WONDER HOW MY FROGS ARE FEELING...
RIGHT NOW?
LOOKS LIKE THAT JACKET AGAIN.
WELL, GREAT! WHAT IS THIS STUFF ANYWAY?

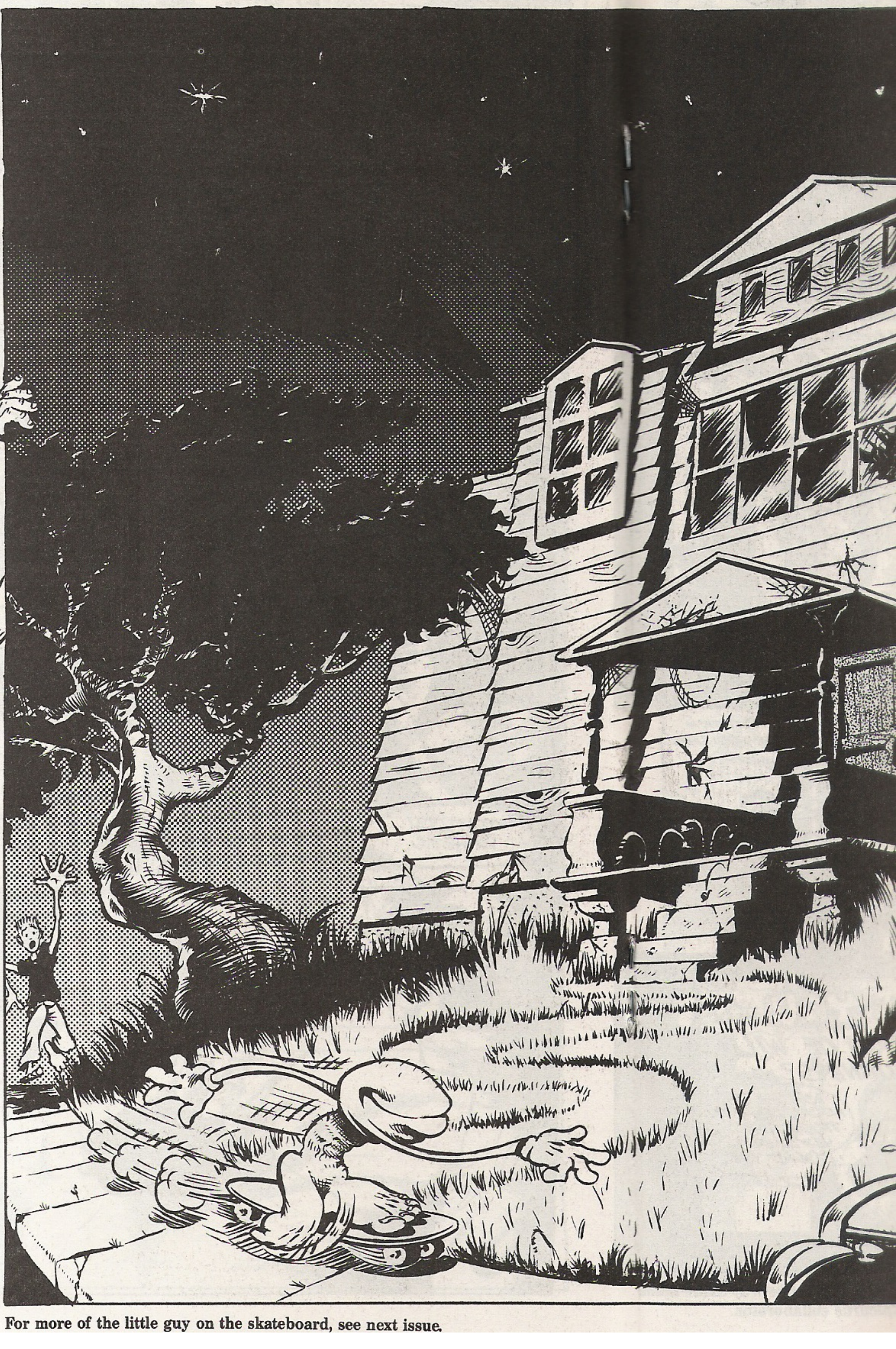

IT'S SPOOKY.
I'LL HIDE, LIKE MY FROGS, UNDER MY COVERS.
I WONDER IF THEY EVER GET SCARED...
OF THE DARK.
...ME.
GEE–
THEY'RE IN THE DARK RIGHT NOW...
...JUST LIKE...
IF I COULD JUST BE SAFE LIKE THEY ARE...
JUST BE...
...WARM AND...


...SAFE.
I'VE LET THIS GO ON TOO LONG BEFORE.
THIS IS IT!
HEY YOU LITTLE STINKER— WAKE UP!
GOD, THAT SMELL IS EVEN WORSE IN HERE!
COME ON, DEENA.
STOP HIDING—
YOU LOOK PATHETIC.
CLICK
JUST TELL ME WHAT THIS STUFF IS.
DEENA?

END.

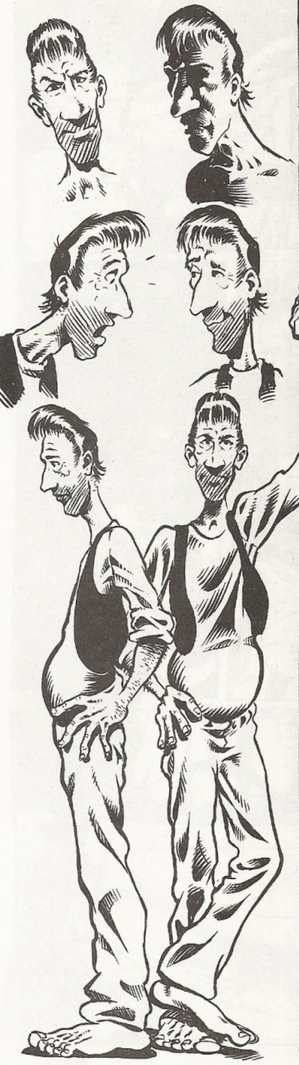
CHARACTER SKETCHES...

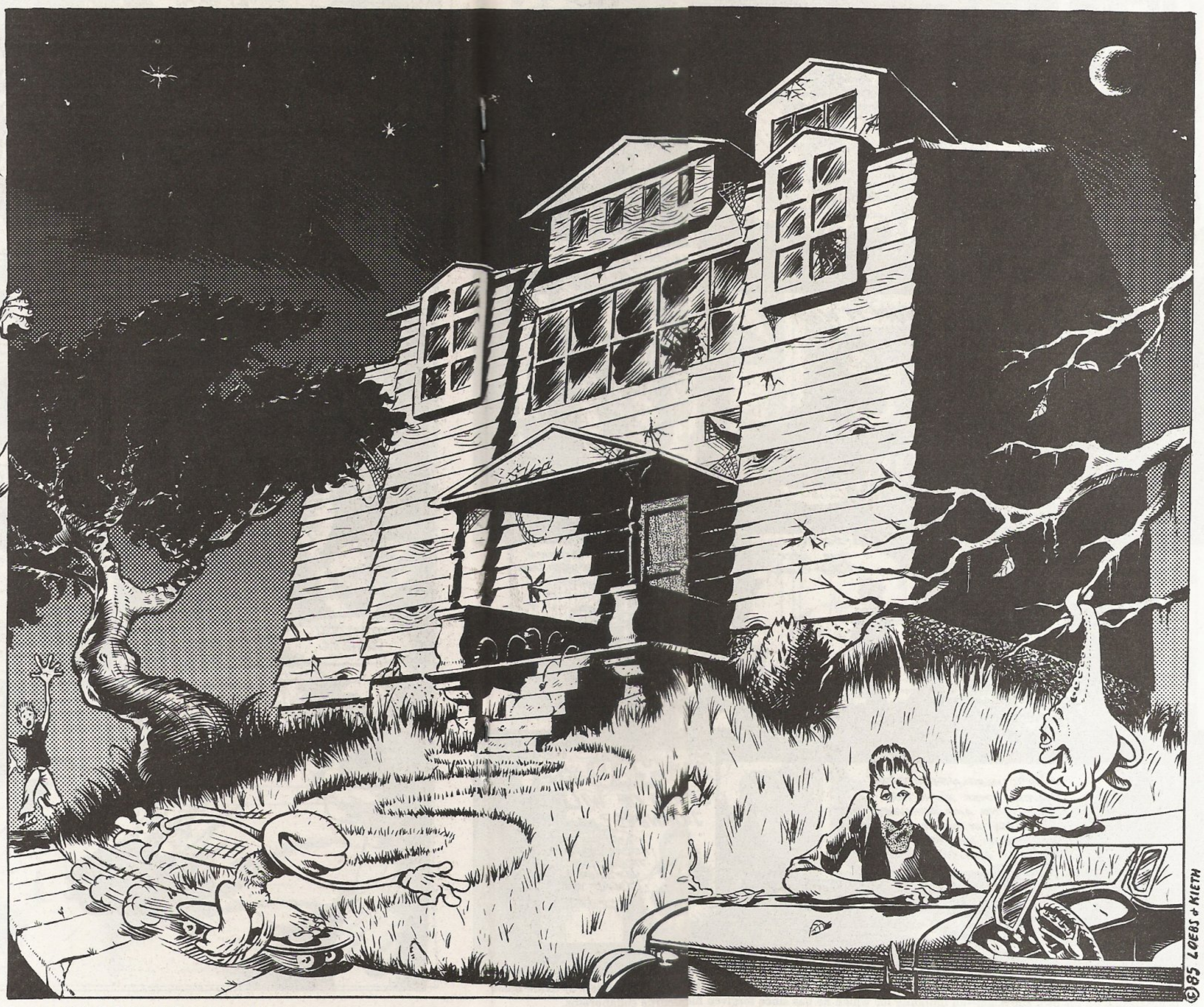




For more of the little guy on the skateboard, see next issue.

CHARACTER SKETCHES... ...FOR A NEVER-FINISHED PROJECT

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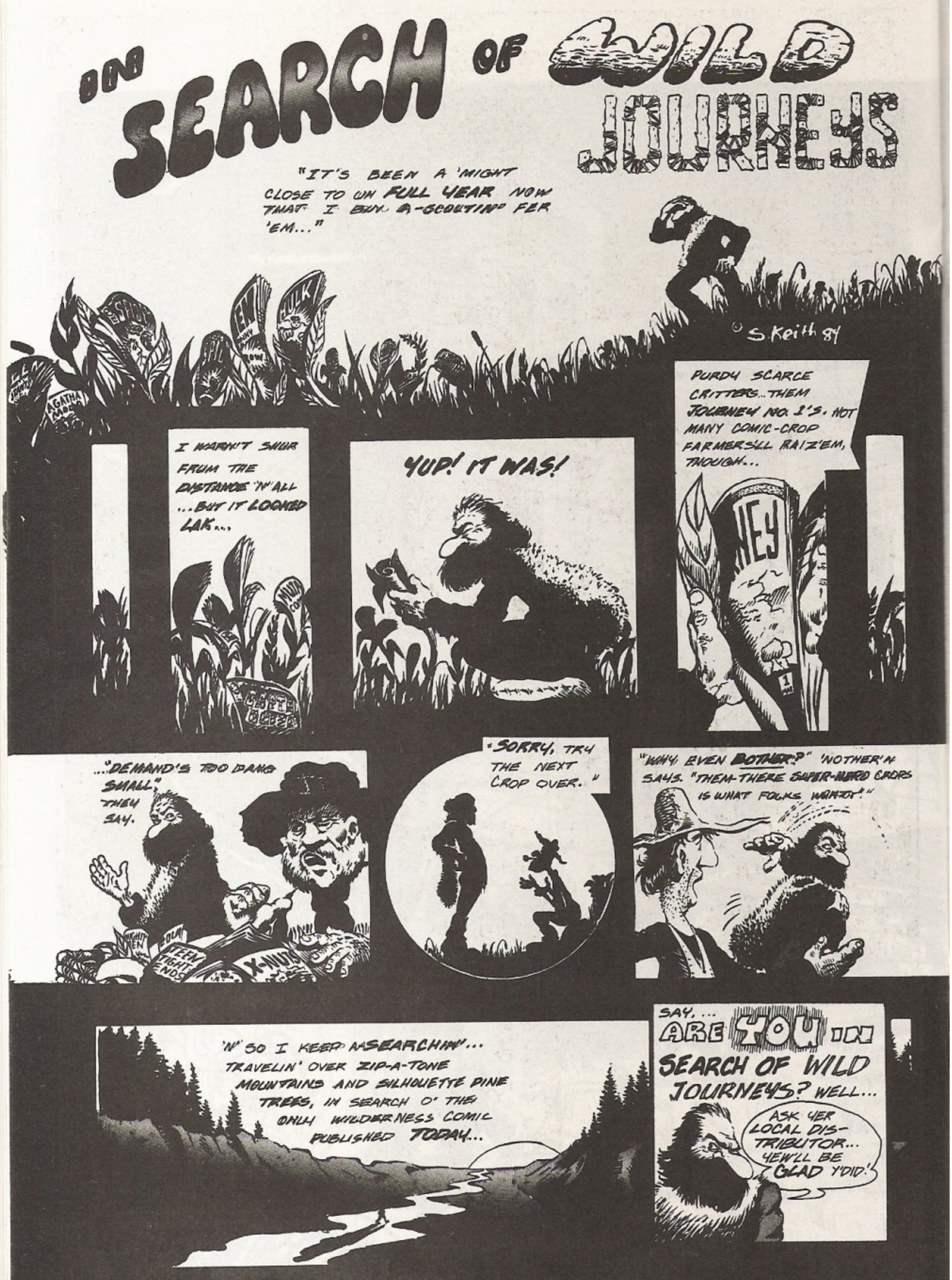
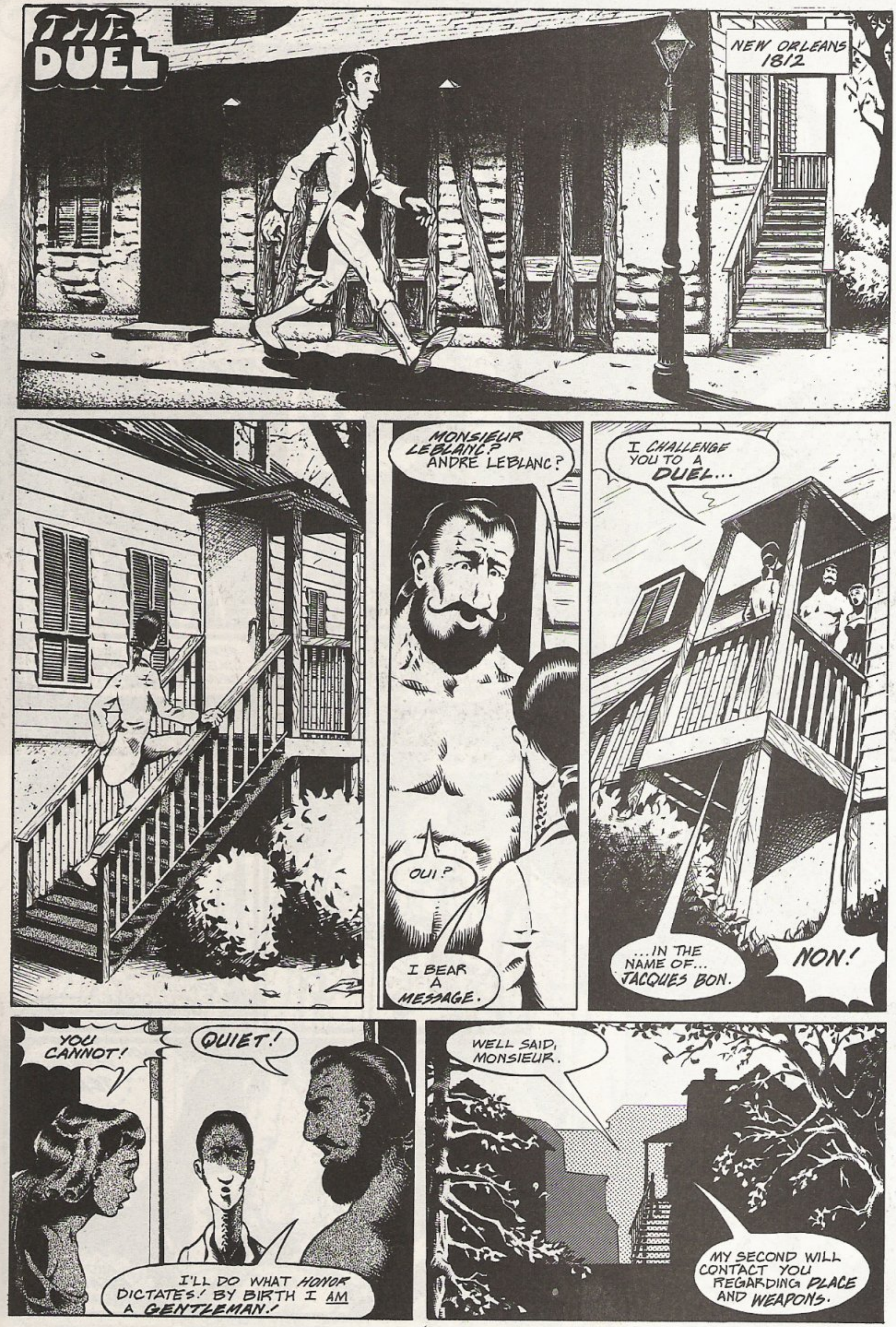
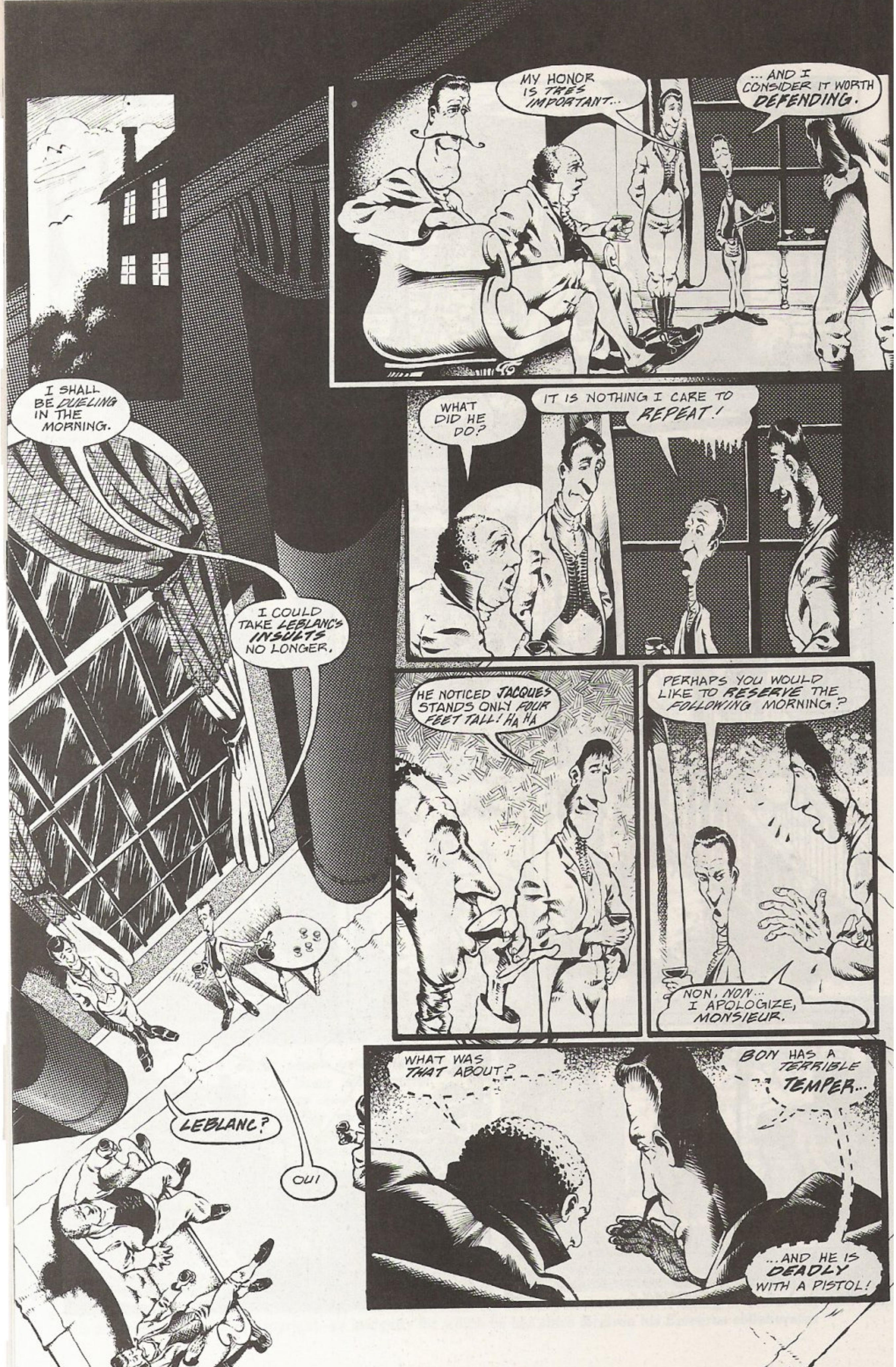
For more of the little guy on the skateboard, see next issue.

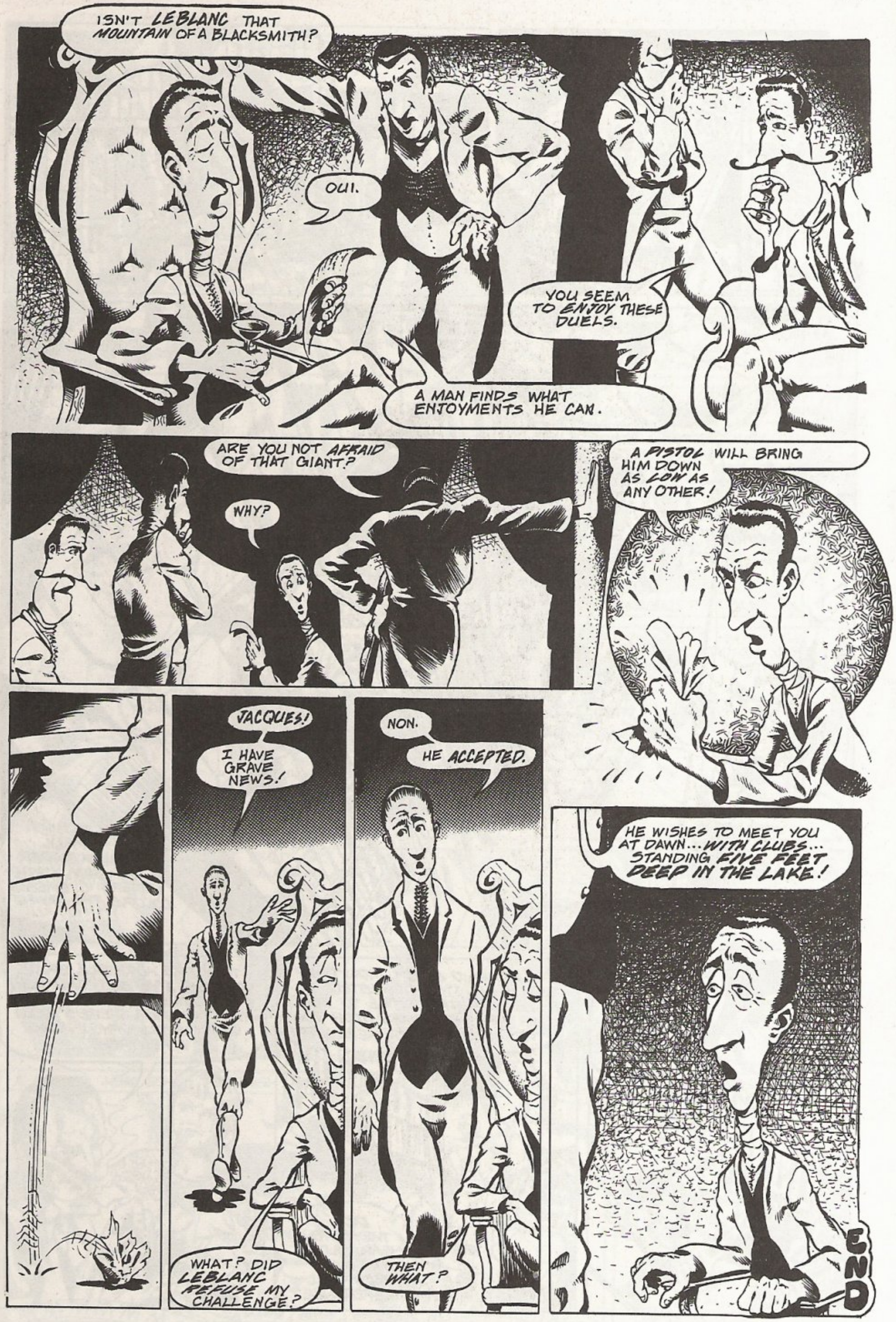
JOURNEY AD *(Journey #14)*


IN SEARCH OF WILD JOURNEYS
"IT'S BEEN A 'MIGHT CLOSE TO UH FULL YEAR NOW THAT I BIN A-SCOUTIN' FER 'EM..."
© S. Keith 84
I WARN'T SHUR FRUM THE DISTANCE 'N' ALL ...BUT IT LOOKED LAK...
YUP! IT WAS!
PURDY SCARCE CRITTERS...THEM JOURNEY NO. 1'S. NOT MANY COMIC-CROP FARMERS'LL RAIZ'EM, THOUGH...
HULK
AGATHA
NEY
..."DEMAND'S TOO DANG SMALL," THEY SAY.
X-NUTS
"SORRY, TRY THE NEXT CROP OVER."
"WHY EVEN BOTHER?" 'NOTHER'N SAYS. "THEM-THERE SUPER-HERO CROPS IS WHAT FOLKS WANT!"
'N' SO I KEEP A-SEARCHIN'... TRAVELIN' OVER ZIP-A-TONE MOUNTAINS AND SILHOUETTE PINE TREES, IN SEARCH O' THE ONLY WILDERNESS COMIC PUBLISHED TODAY...
SAY, ... ARE YOU IN SEARCH OF WILD JOURNEYS? WELL...
ASK YER LOCAL DIS-TRIBUTOR... YEW'LL BE GLAD Y'DID!

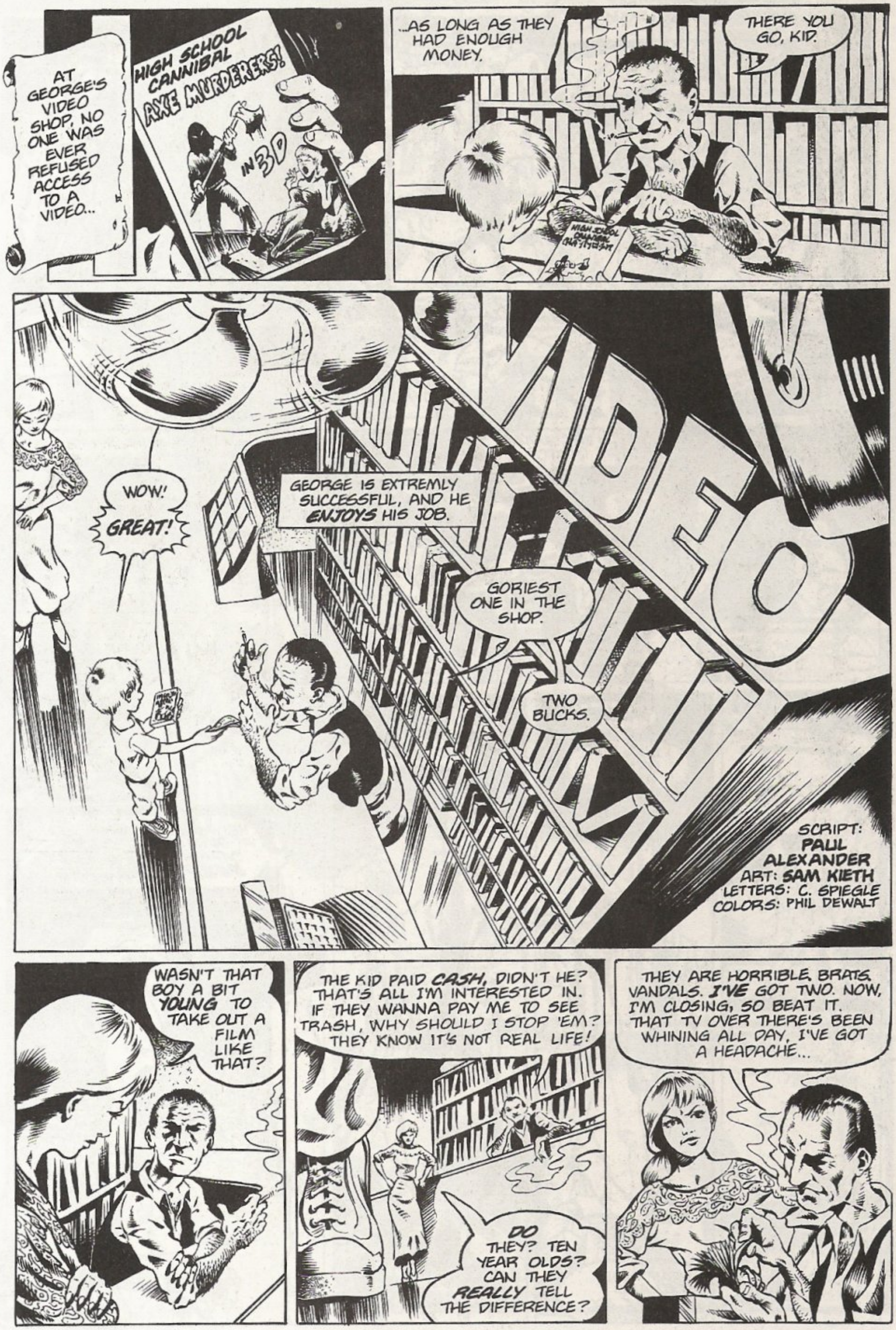
This was the first printed Kieth/Messner-Loebs collaboration; Messner-Loebs did the lettering, which is why Sam's name is misspelled on his own copyright—an indignity for which he has since forgiven his *Epicurus* collaborator.

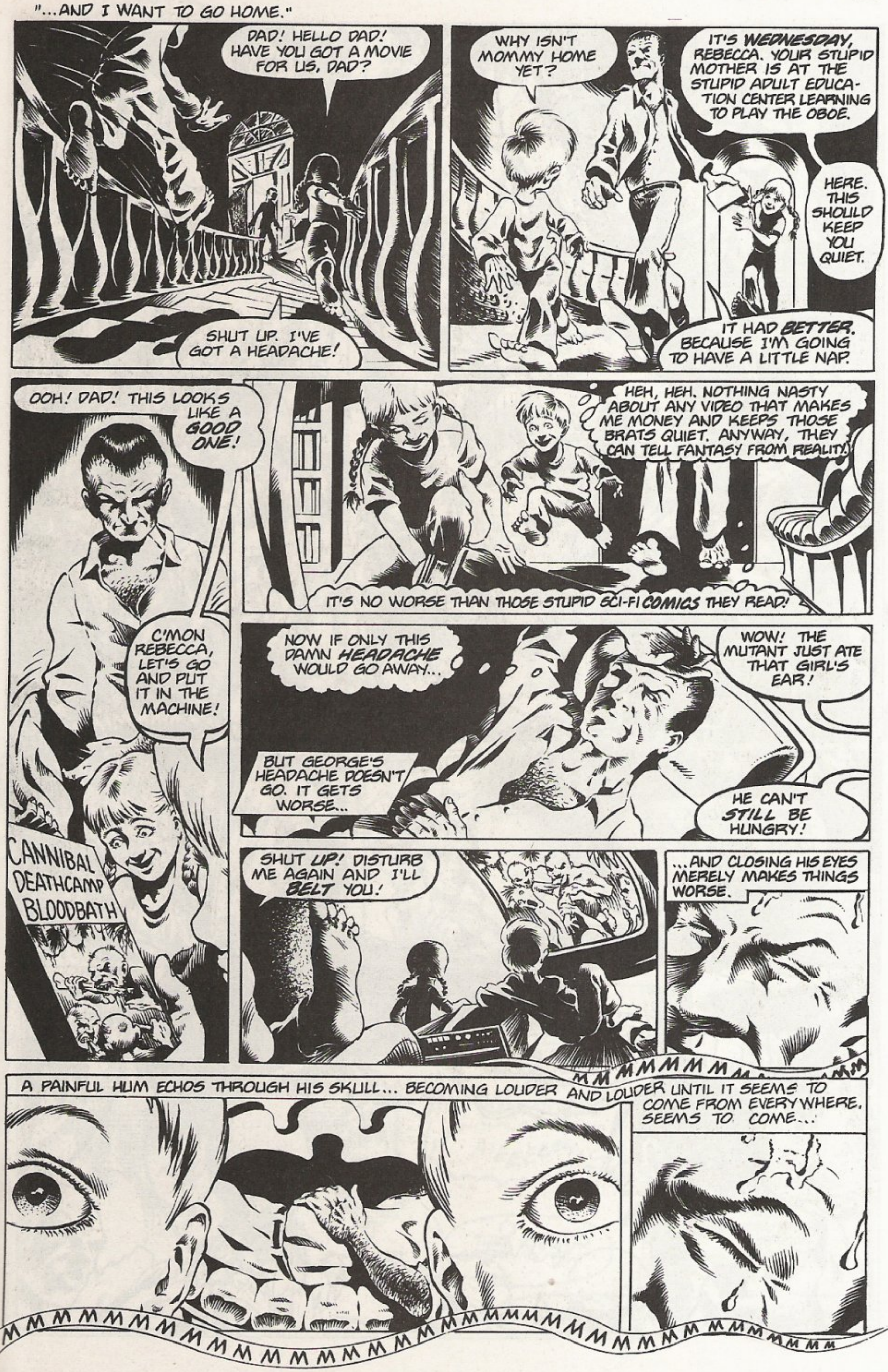

THE DUEL
NEW ORLEANS 1812
MONSIEUR LEBLANC? ANDRE LEBLANC?
OUI?
I BEAR A MESSAGE.
I CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL...
...IN THE NAME OF... JACQUES BON.
NON!
YOU CANNOT!
QUIET!
I'LL DO WHAT HONOR DICTATES! BY BIRTH I AM A GENTLEMAN!
WELL SAID, MONSIEUR.
MY SECOND WILL CONTACT YOU REGARDING PLACE AND WEAPONS.

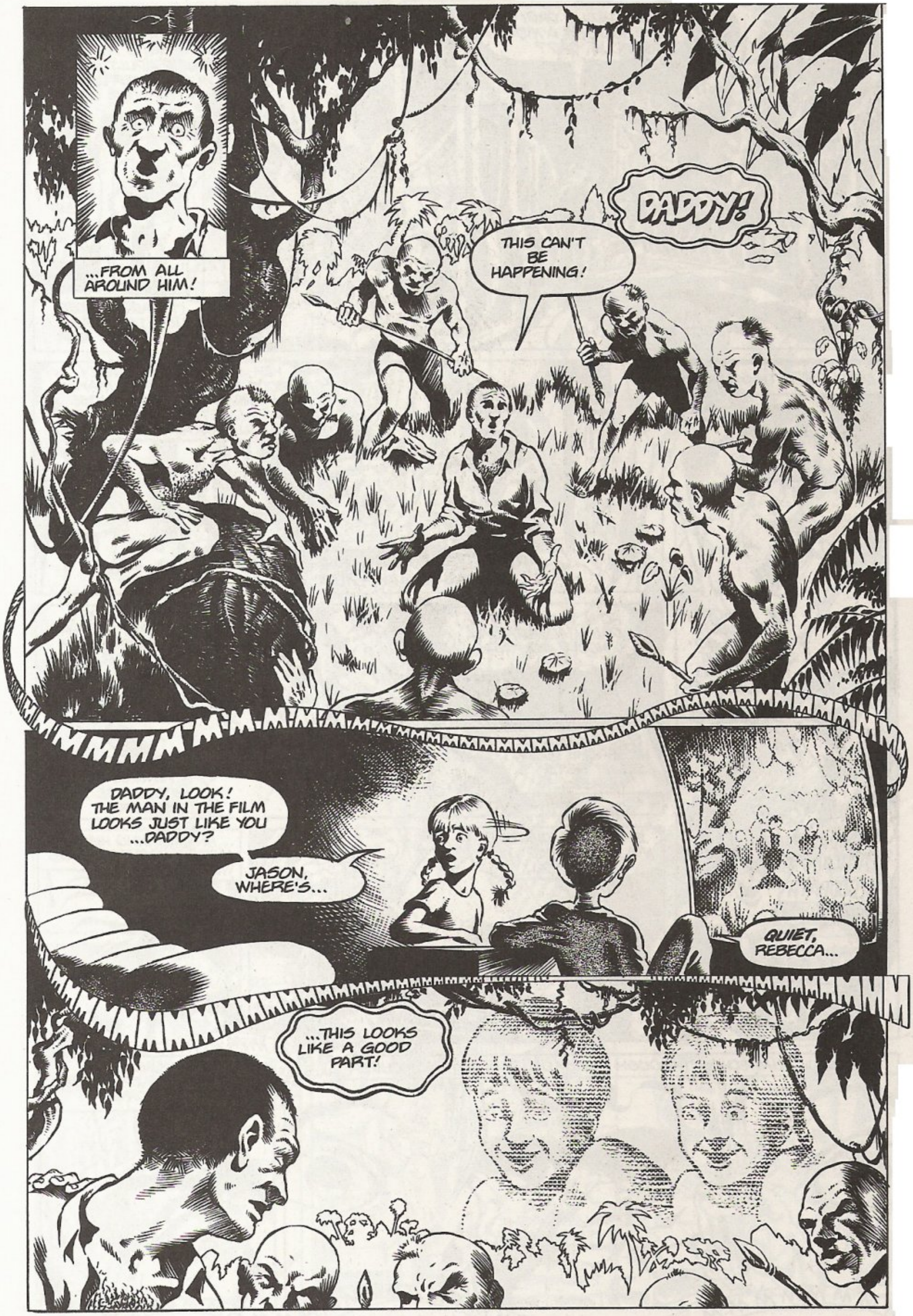

MY HONOR IS *TRES IMPORTANT*...
... AND I CONSIDER IT WORTH ***DEFENDING***.
I SHALL BE *DUELING* IN THE MORNING.
I COULD TAKE *LEBLANC'S* ***INSULTS*** NO LONGER.
WHAT DID HE DO?
IT IS NOTHING I CARE TO *REPEAT!*
HE NOTICED ***JACQUES*** STANDS ONLY *FOUR FEET TALL!* *HA HA*
PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ***RESERVE*** THE *FOLLOWING* MORNING?
NON, NON... I APOLOGIZE, ***MONSIEUR***.
LEBLANC?
OUI
WHAT WAS *THAT* ABOUT?
BON HAS A *TERRIBLE* ***TEMPER***...
...AND HE IS ***DEADLY*** WITH A PISTOL!

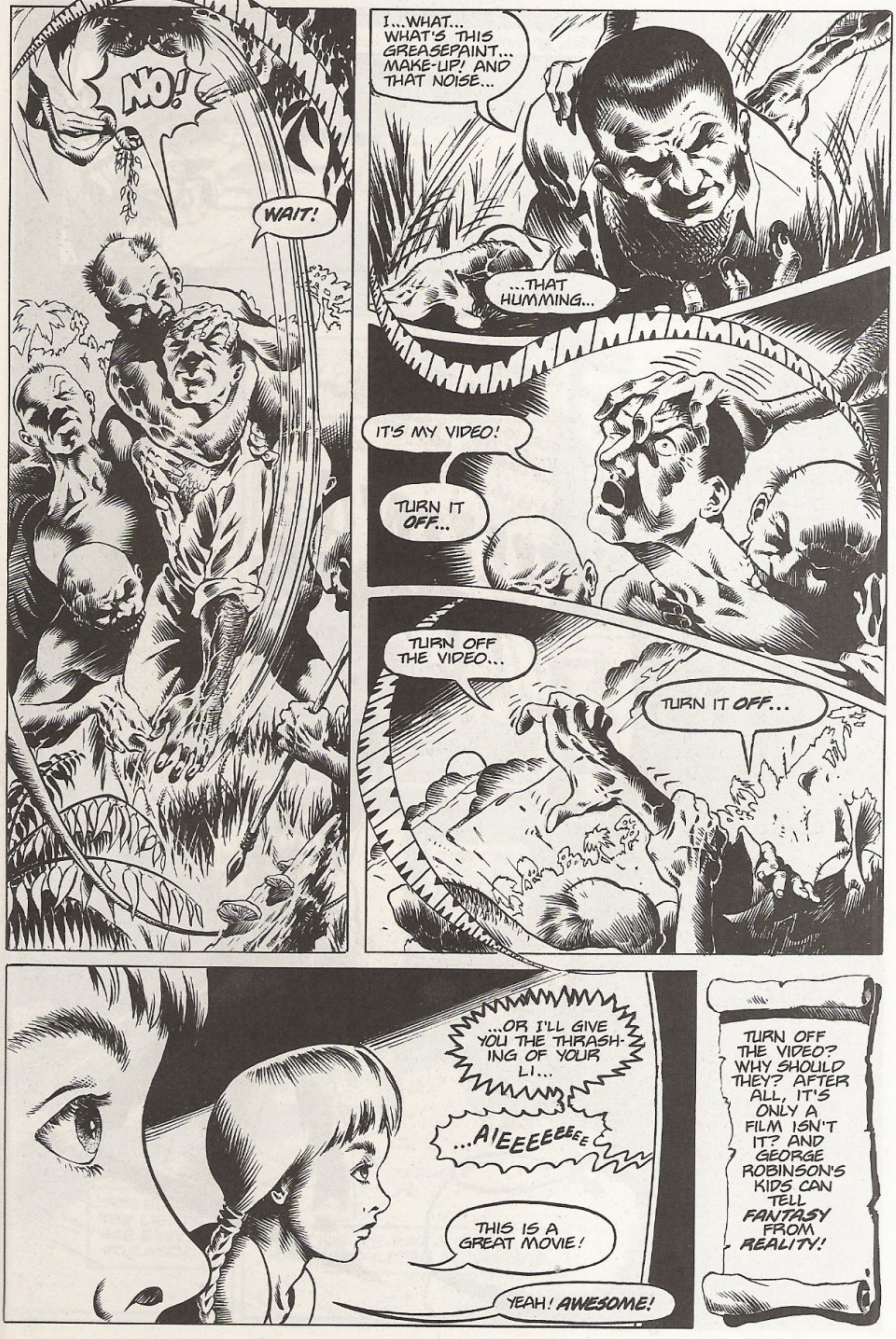

ISN'T LEBLANC THAT MOUNTAIN OF A BLACKSMITH?
OUI.
YOU SEEM TO ENJOY THESE DUELS.
A MAN FINDS WHAT ENJOYMENTS HE CAN.
ARE YOU NOT AFRAID OF THAT GIANT?
WHY?
A PISTOL WILL BRING HIM DOWN AS LOW AS ANY OTHER!
JACQUES!
I HAVE GRAVE NEWS!
WHAT? DID LEBLANC REFUSE MY CHALLENGE?
NON.
HE ACCEPTED.
THEN WHAT?
HE WISHES TO MEET YOU AT DAWN... WITH CLUBS... STANDING FIVE FEET DEEP IN THE LAKE!
END

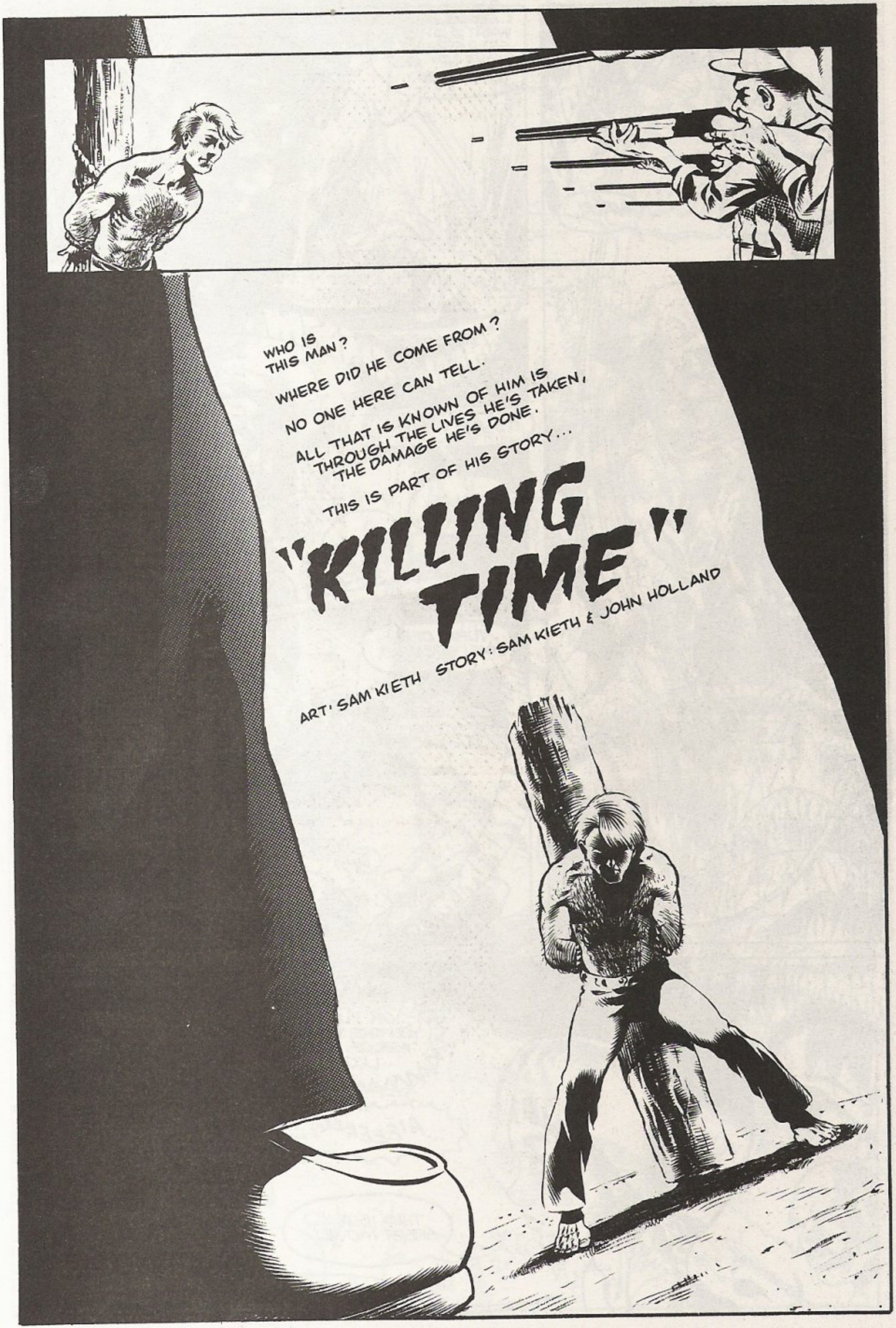
VIDEO *(Tales of Terror #7)*

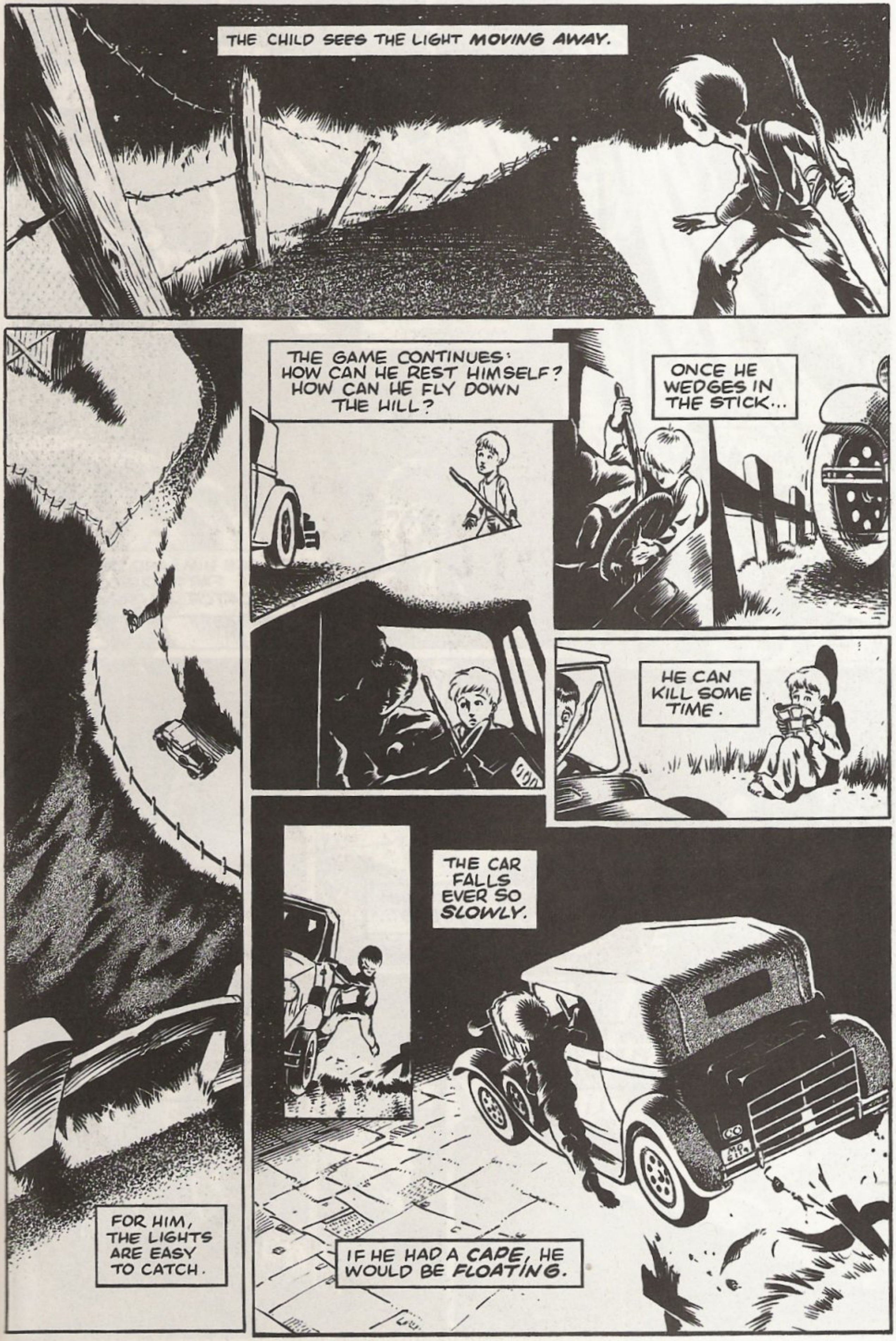

AT GEORGE'S VIDEO SHOP, NO ONE WAS EVER REFUSED ACCESS TO A VIDEO...
HIGH SCHOOL CANNIBAL AXE MURDERERS! IN 3D
...AS LONG AS THEY HAD ENOUGH MONEY.
THERE YOU GO, KID.
HIGH SCHOOL CANNIBAL
VIDEO
GEORGE IS EXTREMLY SUCCESSFUL, AND HE ENJOYS HIS JOB.
WOW! GREAT!
GORIEST ONE IN THE SHOP.
TWO BUCKS.
SCRIPT: PAUL ALEXANDER
ART: SAM KIETH
LETTERS: C. SPIEGLE
COLORS: PHIL DEWALT
WASN'T THAT BOY A BIT YOUNG TO TAKE OUT A FILM LIKE THAT?
THE KID PAID CASH, DIDN'T HE? THAT'S ALL I'M INTERESTED IN. IF THEY WANNA PAY ME TO SEE TRASH, WHY SHOULD I STOP 'EM? THEY KNOW IT'S NOT REAL LIFE!
DO THEY? TEN YEAR OLDS? CAN THEY REALLY TELL THE DIFFERENCE?
THEY ARE HORRIBLE BRATS. VANDALS. I'VE GOT TWO. NOW, I'M CLOSING, SO BEAT IT. THAT TV OVER THERE'S BEEN WHINING ALL DAY, I'VE GOT A HEADACHE...

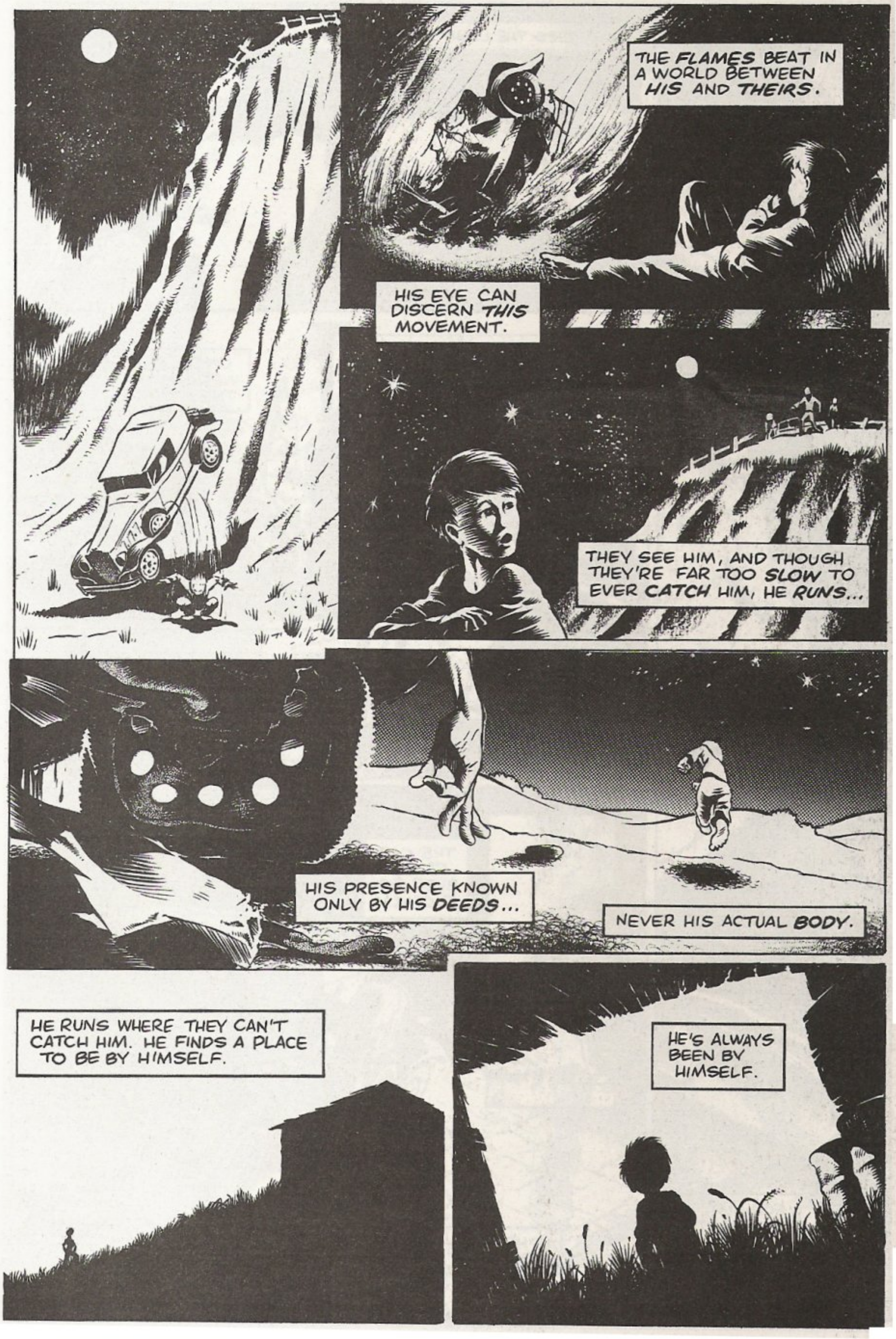

"...AND I WANT TO GO HOME."
DAD! HELLO DAD! HAVE YOU GOT A MOVIE FOR US, DAD?
SHUT UP. I'VE GOT A HEADACHE!
WHY ISN'T MOMMY HOME YET?
IT'S WEDNESDAY, REBECCA. YOUR STUPID MOTHER IS AT THE STUPID ADULT EDUCATION CENTER LEARNING TO PLAY THE OBOE.
HERE. THIS SHOULD KEEP YOU QUIET.
IT HAD BETTER. BECAUSE I'M GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE NAP.
OOH! DAD! THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD ONE!
C'MON REBECCA, LET'S GO AND PUT IT IN THE MACHINE!
CANNIBAL DEATHCAMP BLOODBATH
HEH, HEH. NOTHING NASTY ABOUT ANY VIDEO THAT MAKES ME MONEY AND KEEPS THOSE BRATS QUIET. ANYWAY, THEY CAN TELL FANTASY FROM REALITY.
IT'S NO WORSE THAN THOSE STUPID SCI-FI COMICS THEY READ!
NOW IF ONLY THIS DAMN HEADACHE WOULD GO AWAY...
BUT GEORGE'S HEADACHE DOESN'T GO. IT GETS WORSE...
WOW! THE MUTANT JUST ATE THAT GIRL'S EAR!
HE CAN'T STILL BE HUNGRY!
SHUT UP! DISTURB ME AGAIN AND I'LL BELT YOU!
...AND CLOSING HIS EYES MERELY MAKES THINGS WORSE.
MMMMMMMMMMM
A PAINFUL HUM ECHOS THROUGH HIS SKULL... BECOMING LOUDER AND LOUDER UNTIL IT SEEMS TO COME FROM EVERYWHERE. SEEMS TO COME...
MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM

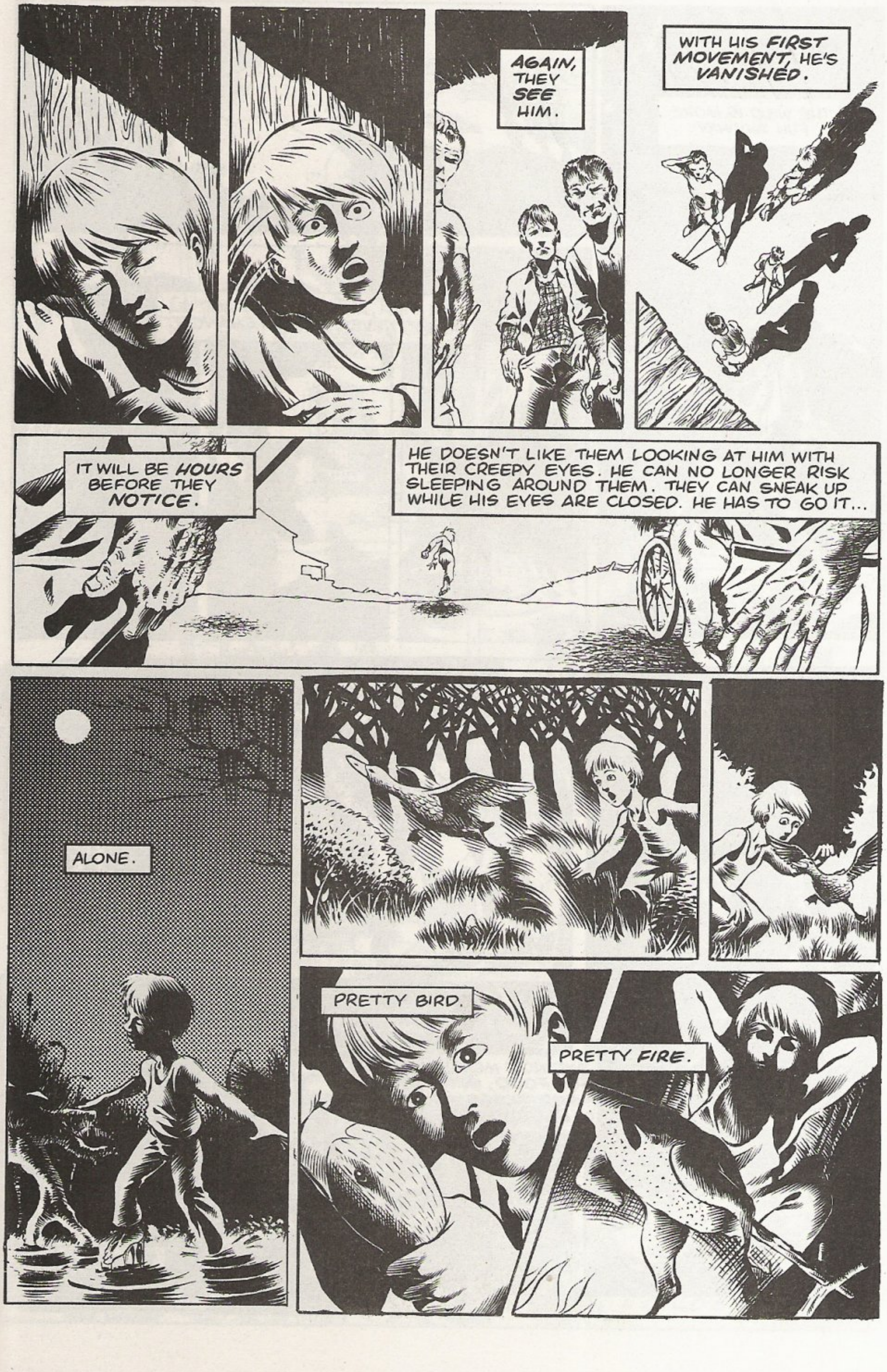

...FROM ALL AROUND HIM!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
DADDY!
MMMMM-M-M-M-M-M-MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
DADDY, LOOK! THE MAN IN THE FILM LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU ...DADDY?
JASON, WHERE'S...
QUIET, REBECCA...
MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
...THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD PART!

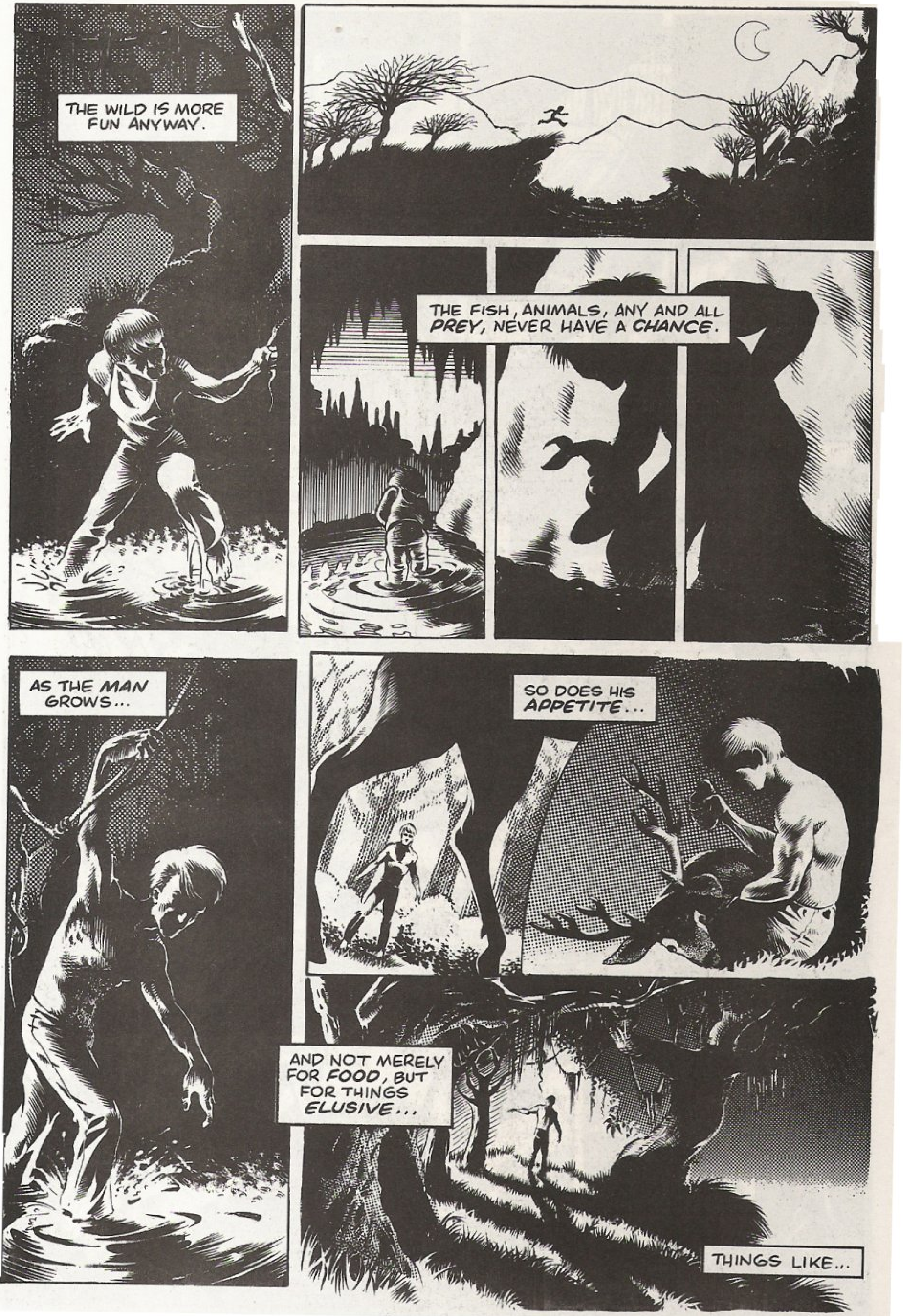

MMMMMMMMMMMM
NO!
WAIT!
I... WHAT... WHAT'S THIS GREASEPAINT... MAKE-UP! AND THAT NOISE...
...THAT HUMMING...
MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
IT'S MY VIDEO!
TURN IT OFF...
TURN OFF THE VIDEO...
TURN IT OFF...
...OR I'LL GIVE YOU THE THRASHING OF YOUR LI...
...AIEEEEEEEE
THIS IS A GREAT MOVIE!
YEAH! AWESOME!
TURN OFF THE VIDEO? WHY SHOULD THEY? AFTER ALL, IT'S ONLY A FILM ISN'T IT? AND GEORGE ROBINSON'S KIDS CAN TELL FANTASY FROM REALITY!

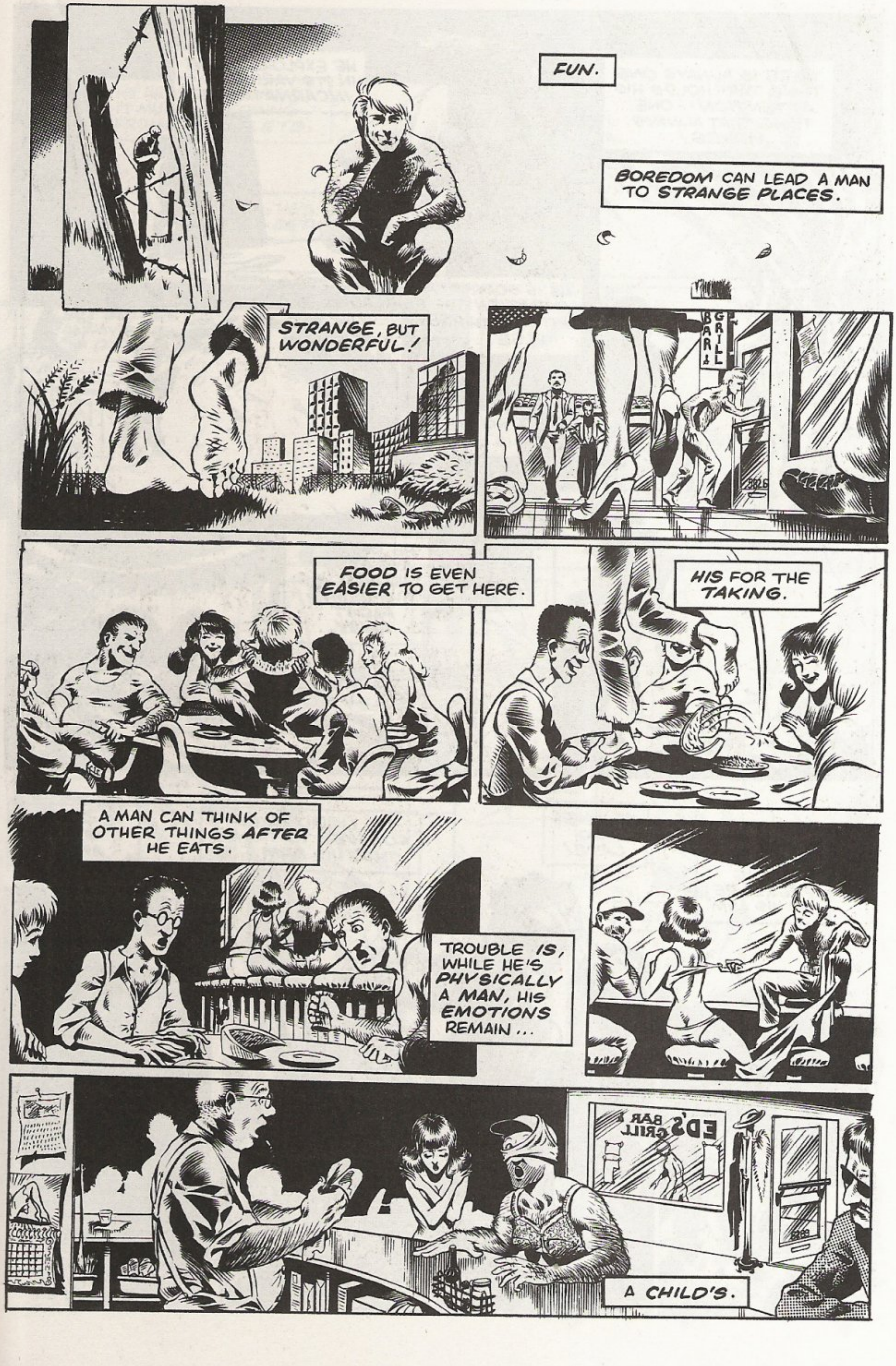

WHO IS THIS MAN?
WHERE DID HE COME FROM?
NO ONE HERE CAN TELL.
ALL THAT IS KNOWN OF HIM IS THROUGH THE LIVES HE'S TAKEN, THE DAMAGE HE'S DONE.
THIS IS PART OF HIS STORY...
"KILLING TIME"
ART: SAM KIETH STORY: SAM KIETH & JOHN HOLLAND

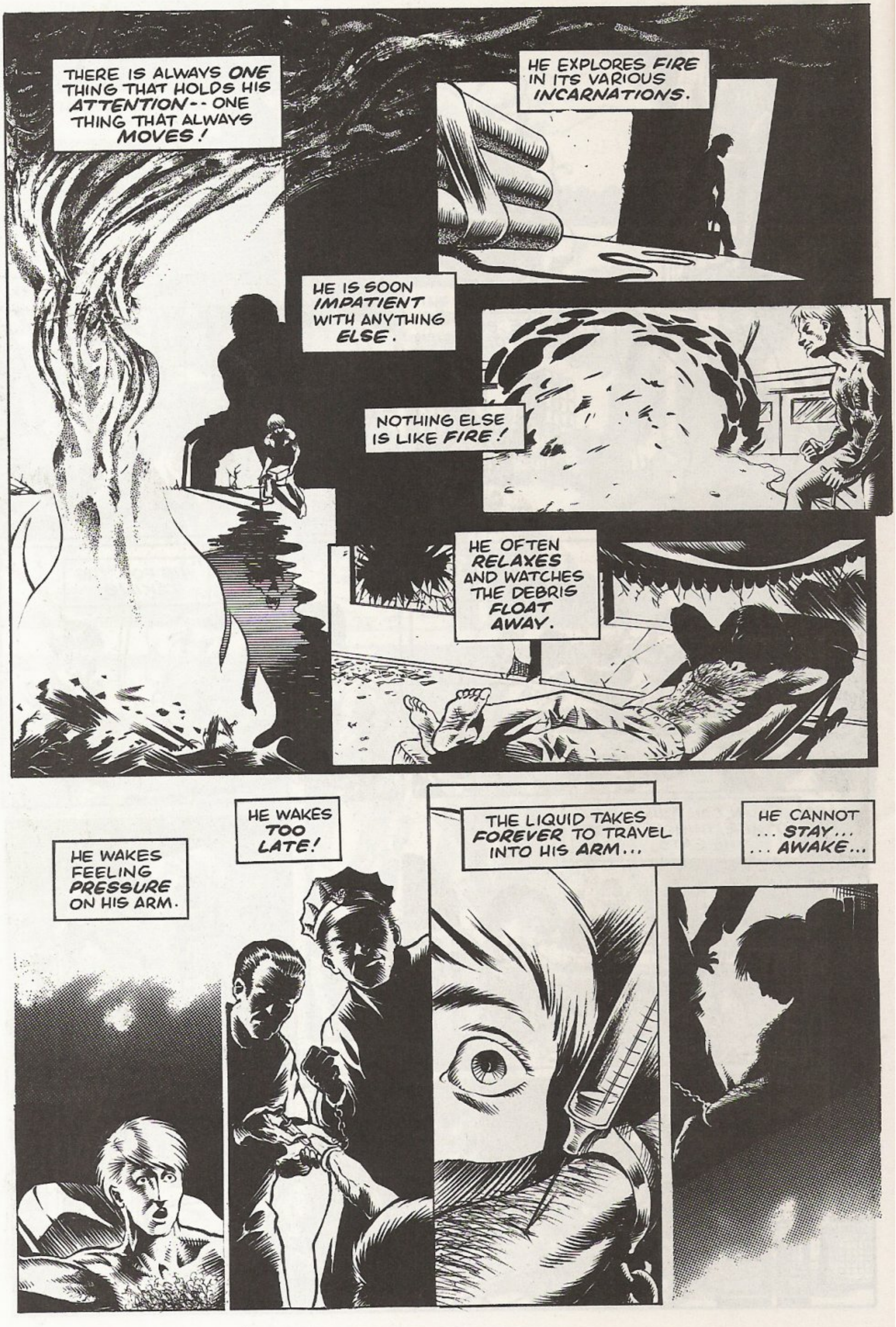

THE CHILD SEES THE LIGHT MOVING AWAY.
THE GAME CONTINUES: HOW CAN HE REST HIMSELF? HOW CAN HE FLY DOWN THE HILL?
ONCE HE WEDGES IN THE STICK...
HE CAN KILL SOME TIME.
THE CAR FALLS EVER SO SLOWLY.
FOR HIM, THE LIGHTS ARE EASY TO CATCH.
IF HE HAD A CAPE, HE WOULD BE FLOATING.

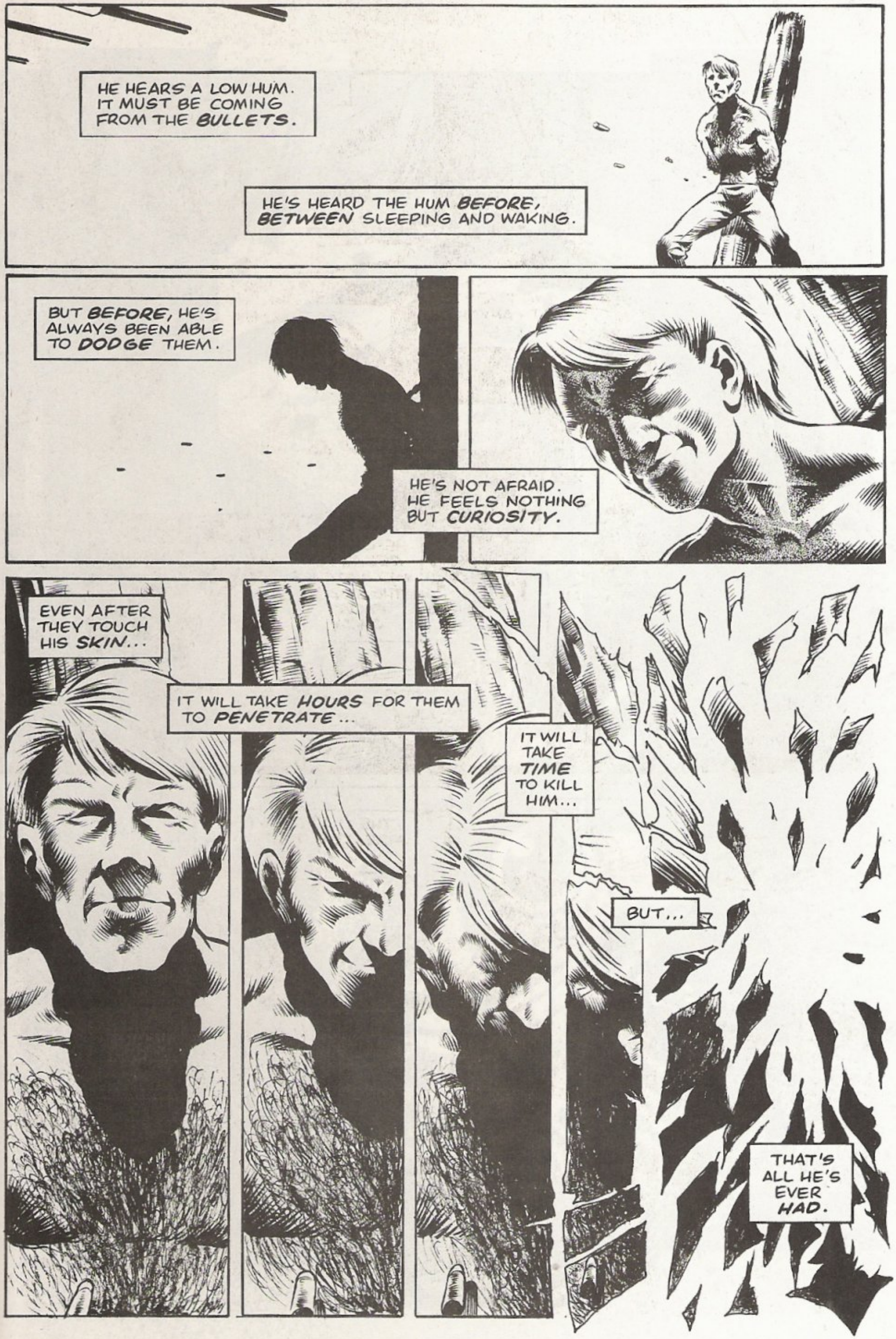

THE FLAMES BEAT IN A WORLD BETWEEN HIS AND THEIRS.
HIS EYE CAN DISCERN THIS MOVEMENT.
THEY SEE HIM, AND THOUGH THEY'RE FAR TOO SLOW TO EVER CATCH HIM, HE RUNS...
HIS PRESENCE KNOWN ONLY BY HIS DEEDS...
NEVER HIS ACTUAL BODY.
HE RUNS WHERE THEY CAN'T CATCH HIM. HE FINDS A PLACE TO BE BY HIMSELF.
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN BY HIMSELF.

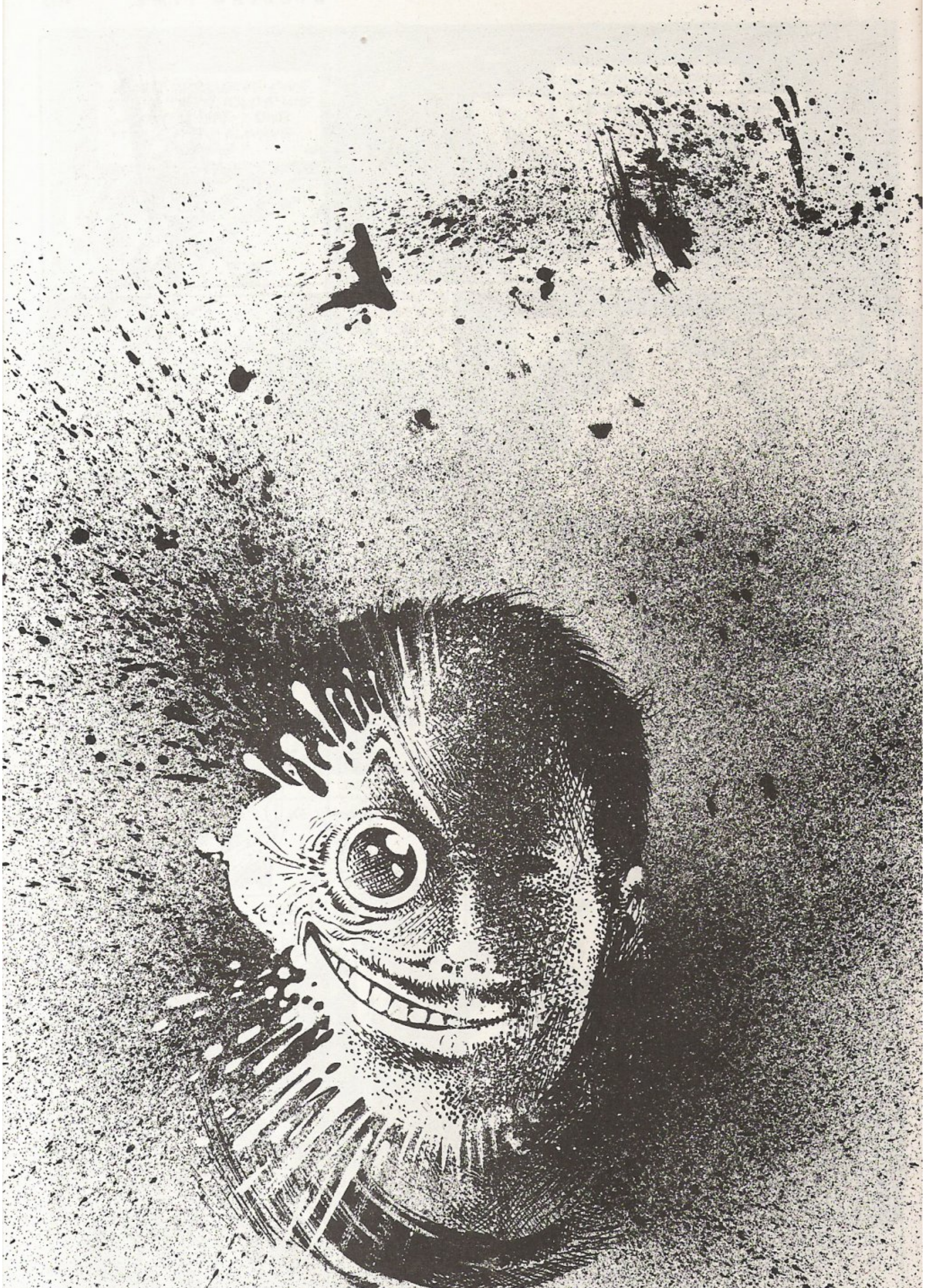

AGAIN, THEY SEE HIM.
WITH HIS FIRST MOVEMENT, HE'S VANISHED.
IT WILL BE HOURS BEFORE THEY NOTICE.
HE DOESN'T LIKE THEM LOOKING AT HIM WITH THEIR CREEPY EYES. HE CAN NO LONGER RISK SLEEPING AROUND THEM. THEY CAN SNEAK UP WHILE HIS EYES ARE CLOSED. HE HAS TO GO IT...
ALONE.
PRETTY BIRD.
PRETTY FIRE.

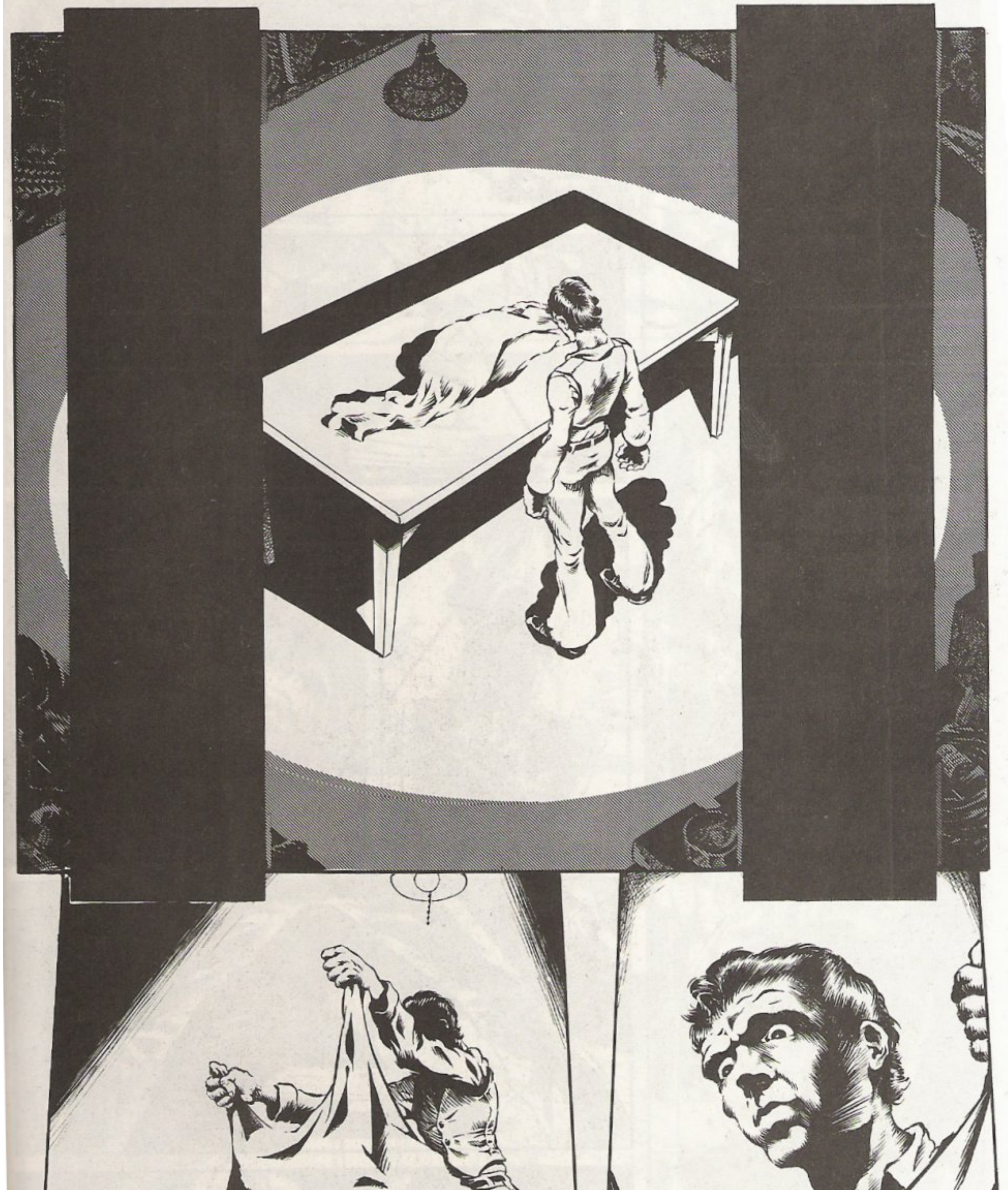

THE WILD IS MORE FUN ANYWAY.
THE FISH, ANIMALS, ANY AND ALL *PREY*, NEVER HAVE A *CHANCE*.
AS THE *MAN* GROWS...
SO DOES HIS *APPETITE*...
AND NOT MERELY FOR *FOOD*, BUT FOR THINGS *ELUSIVE*...
THINGS LIKE...


FUN.
BOREDOM CAN LEAD A MAN TO STRANGE PLACES.
STRANGE, BUT WONDERFUL!
BAR & GRILL
FOOD IS EVEN EASIER TO GET HERE.
HIS FOR THE TAKING.
A MAN CAN THINK OF OTHER THINGS AFTER HE EATS.
TROUBLE IS, WHILE HE'S PHYSICALLY A MAN, HIS EMOTIONS REMAIN...
ED'S BAR & GRILL
A CHILD'S.

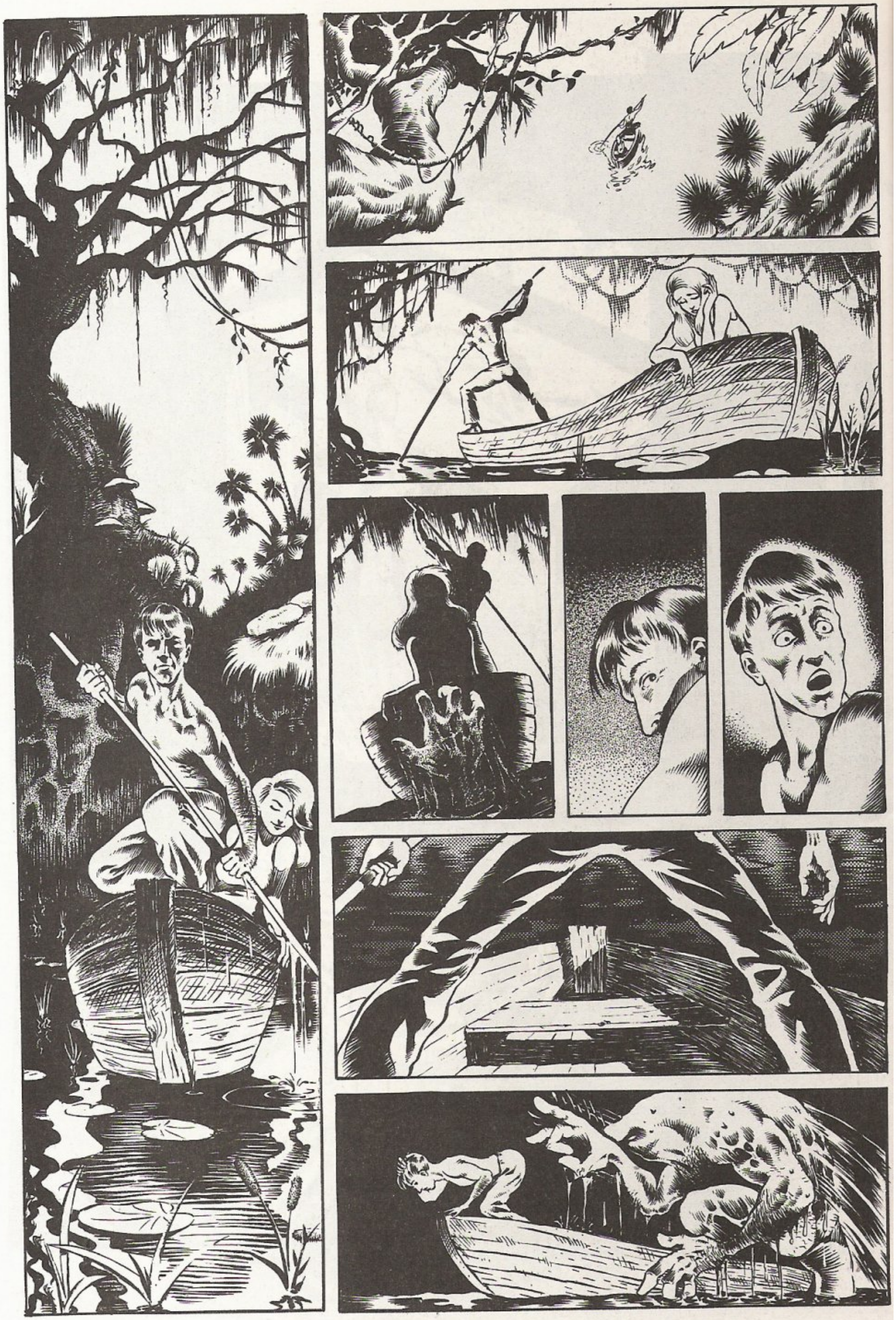

THERE IS ALWAYS ONE THING THAT HOLDS HIS ATTENTION-- ONE THING THAT ALWAYS MOVES!
HE EXPLORES FIRE IN ITS VARIOUS INCARNATIONS.
HE IS SOON IMPATIENT WITH ANYTHING ELSE.
NOTHING ELSE IS LIKE FIRE!
HE OFTEN RELAXES AND WATCHES THE DEBRIS FLOAT AWAY.
HE WAKES FEELING PRESSURE ON HIS ARM.
HE WAKES TOO LATE!
THE LIQUID TAKES FOREVER TO TRAVEL INTO HIS ARM...
HE CANNOT ... STAY... ... AWAKE...

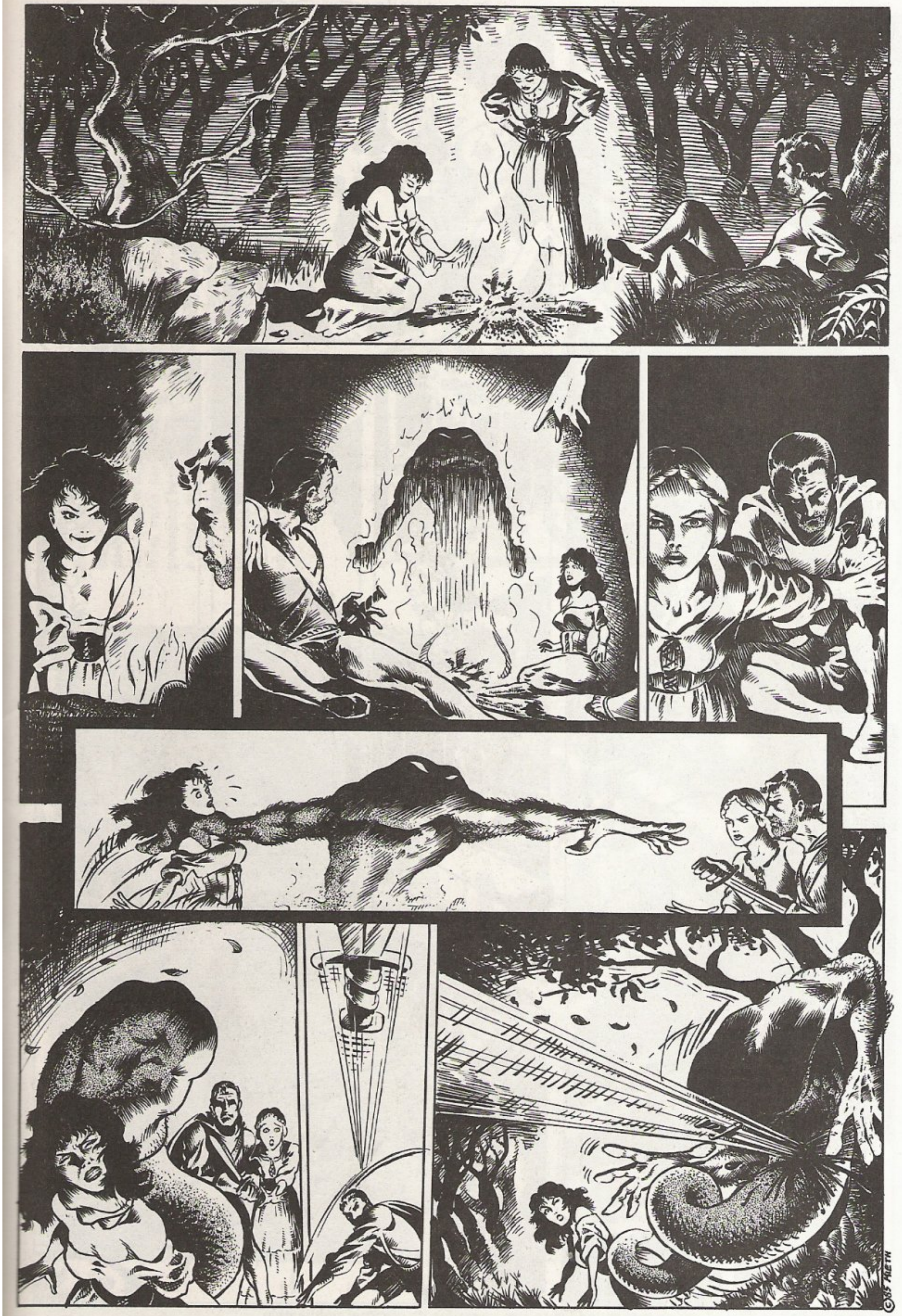

HE HEARS A LOW HUM. IT MUST BE COMING FROM THE **BULLETS**.
HE'S HEARD THE HUM **BEFORE, BETWEEN** SLEEPING AND WAKING.
BUT **BEFORE,** HE'S ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO **DODGE** THEM.
HE'S NOT AFRAID. HE FEELS NOTHING BUT **CURIOSITY**.
EVEN AFTER THEY TOUCH HIS **SKIN**...
IT WILL TAKE **HOURS** FOR THEM TO **PENETRATE**...
IT WILL TAKE **TIME** TO KILL HIM...
BUT...
THAT'S ALL HE'S EVER **HAD**.

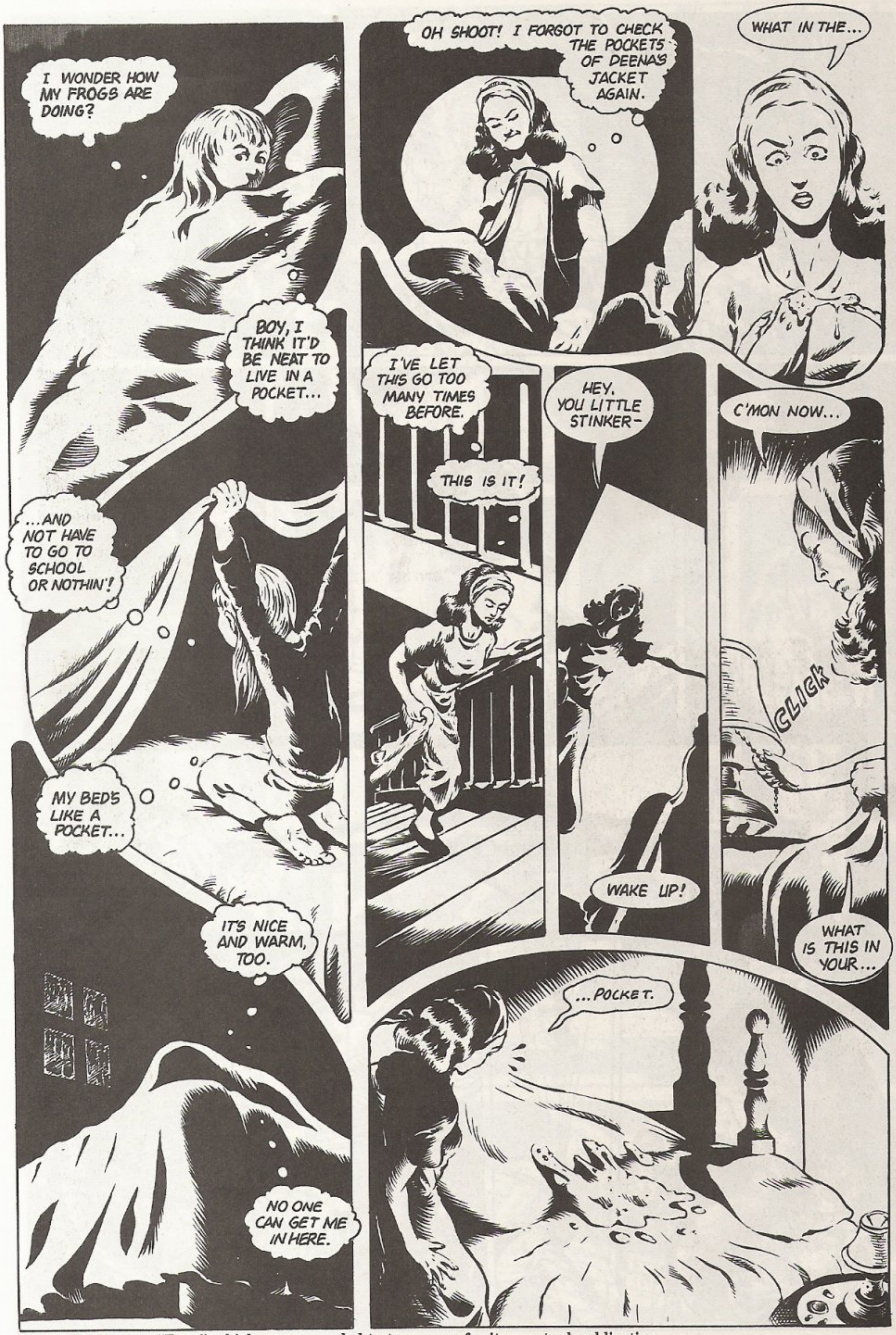




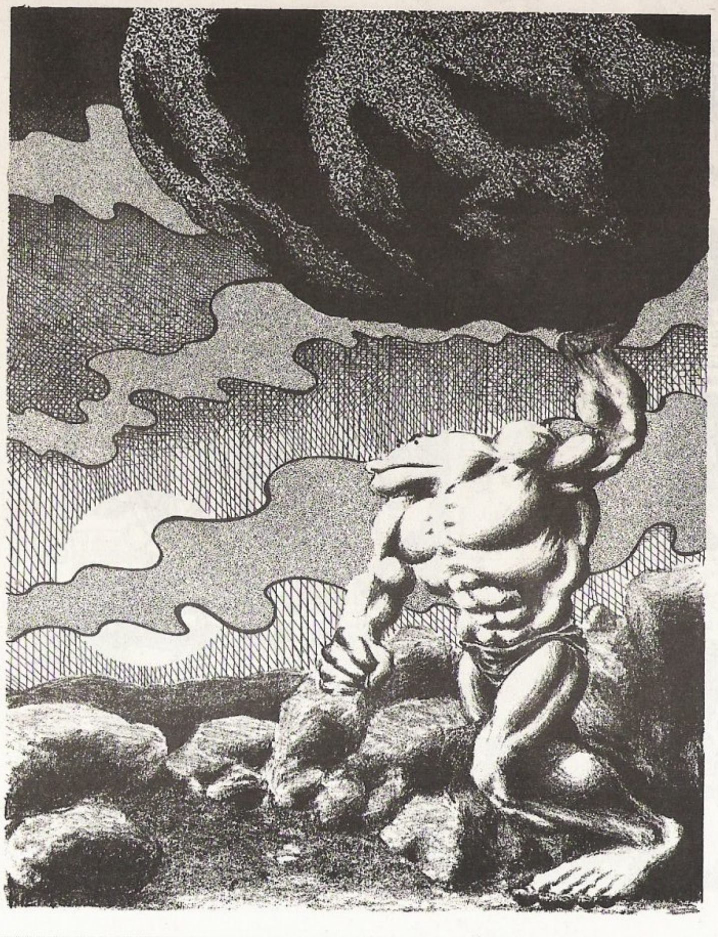
Sample pages from the days when Sam was still pounding the pavement in search of work.




©85 RIETH

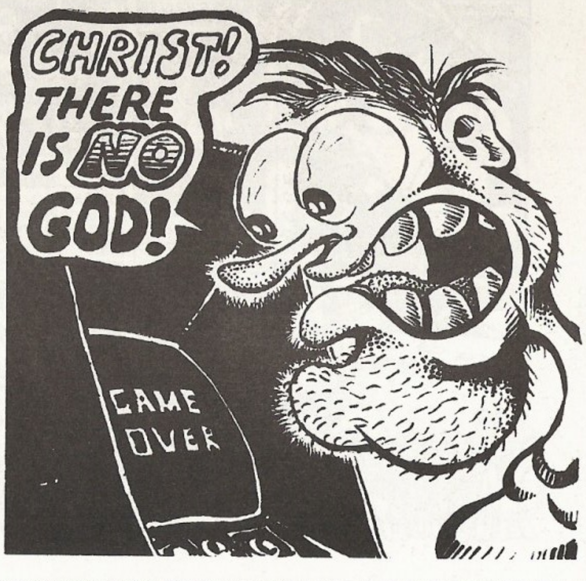

I WONDER HOW MY FROGS ARE DOING?
BOY, I THINK IT'D BE NEAT TO LIVE IN A POCKET...
...AND NOT HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL OR NOTHIN'!
MY BED'S LIKE A POCKET...
IT'S NICE AND WARM, TOO.
NO ONE CAN GET ME IN HERE.
OH SHOOT! I FORGOT TO CHECK THE POCKETS OF DEENA'S JACKET AGAIN.
WHAT IN THE...
I'VE LET THIS GO TOO MANY TIMES BEFORE.
THIS IS IT!
HEY, YOU LITTLE STINKER-
WAKE UP!
C'MON NOW...
CLICK
WHAT IS THIS IN YOUR...
...POCKET.

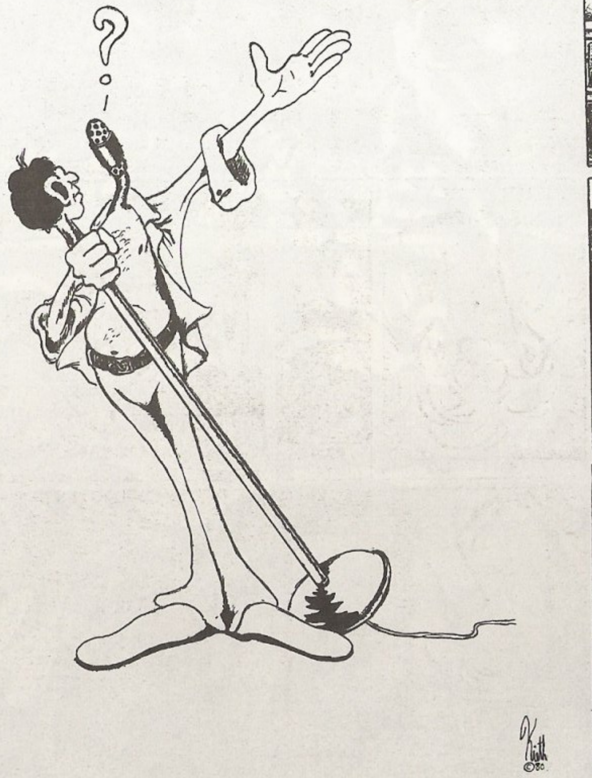
Original ending to "Frog," which was expanded to two pages for its eventual publication.

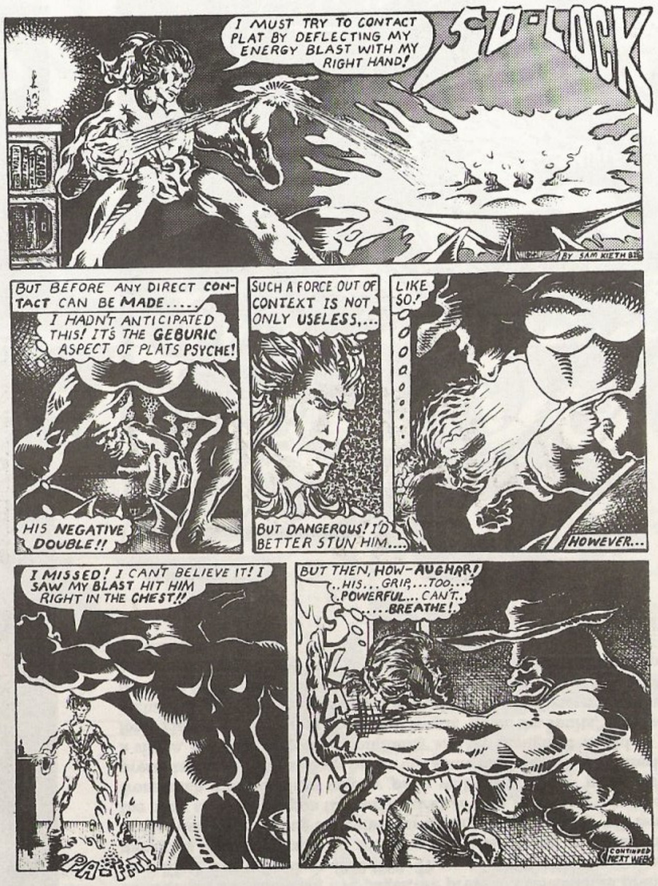


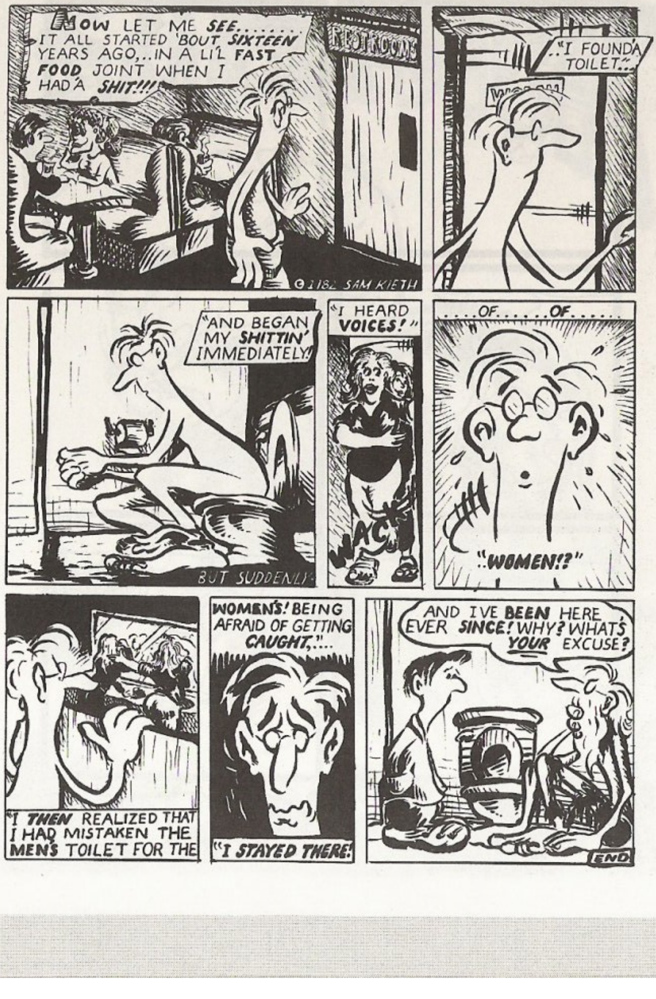
On this and the following five pages, we present a selection of prehistoric Sam Kieth artwork, circa 1980-1982. These youthful efforts are presented partly as encouragement to the young artists among our readers who, despondently surveying their own scribblings, feel that they will *never* get the hang of it. Look upon the early works of Sam Kieth and take heart, for from such small acorns mighty oaks will grow. These pages are also presented here because Sam has sworn some day to tie all his material into a single, gigantic, sprawling continuity and we thought it would be fun to force him to include Super-Dick. Next issue's "From the Vaults," however, will include Max the Hare, an integral part of the whole shmeer. (Despite what it says at the end of "Super-Dick," it was in fact *not* continued — or, at least, has not been so far. We will keep you posted of any further developments on this front.)

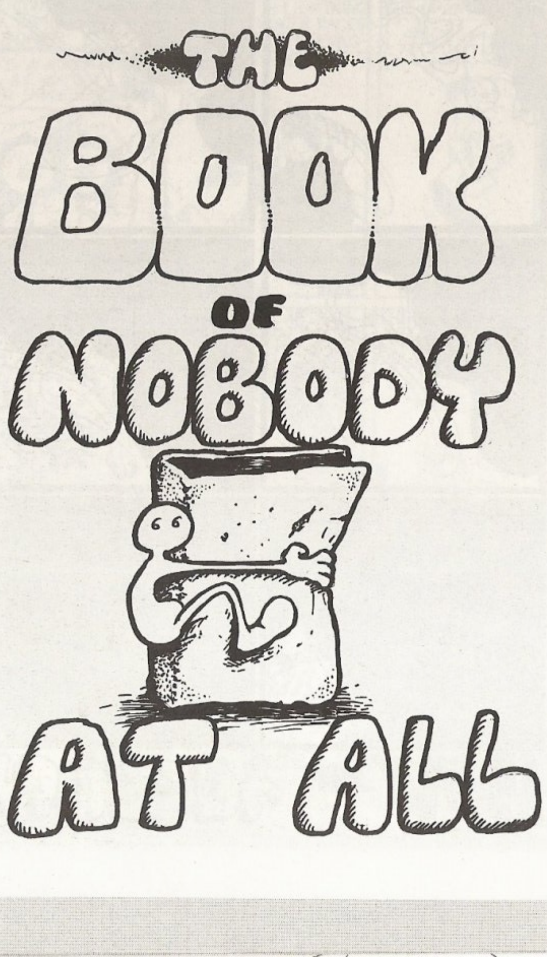
—KIM THOMPSON

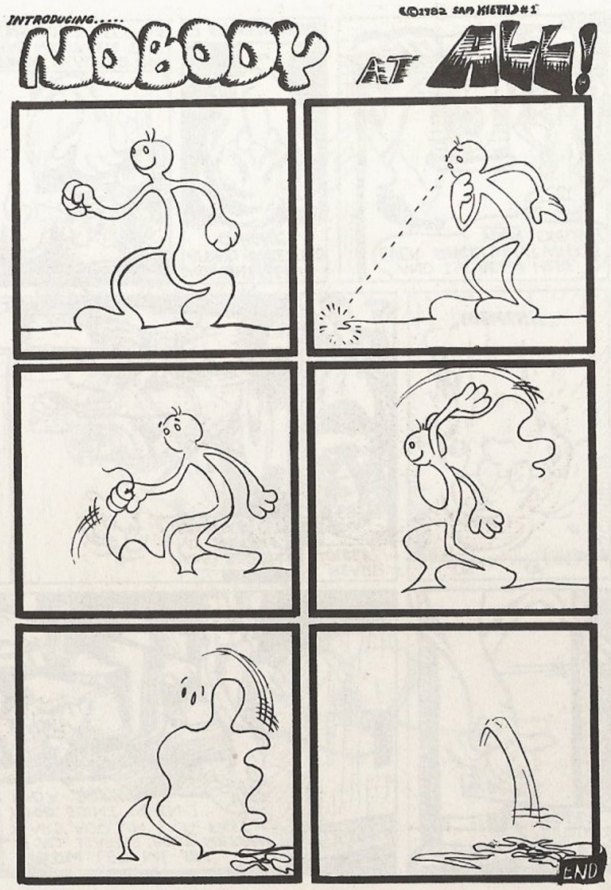

CHRIST! THERE IS NO GOD!
GAME OVER

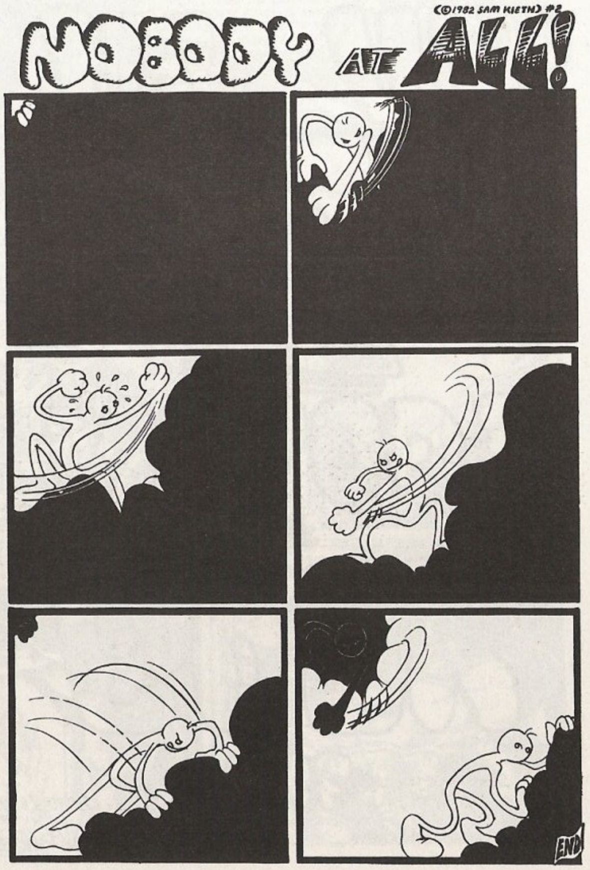

?
Kieth
©80

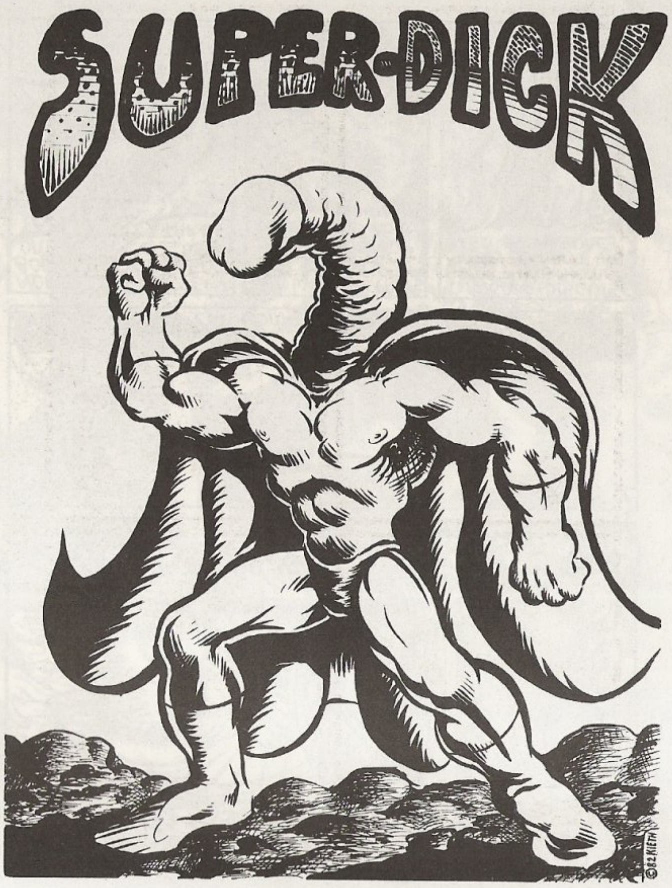

S-D-LOCK
I MUST TRY TO CONTACT PLAT BY DEFLECTING MY ENERGY BLAST WITH MY RIGHT HAND!
BY SAM KIETH 81
BUT BEFORE ANY DIRECT CONTACT CAN BE MADE.....
I HADN'T ANTICIPATED THIS! IT'S THE GEBURIC ASPECT OF PLAT'S PSYCHE!
HIS NEGATIVE DOUBLE!!
SUCH A FORCE OUT OF CONTEXT IS NOT ONLY USELESS,...
BUT DANGEROUS! I'D BETTER STUN HIM...
LIKE SO!
HOWEVER...
I MISSED! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I SAW MY BLAST HIT HIM RIGHT IN THE CHEST!!
PA-FFT!
BUT THEN, HOW-AUGHRR! ..HIS... GRIP... TOO... POWERFUL... CAN'T.. .....BREATHE!
SLAM!
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

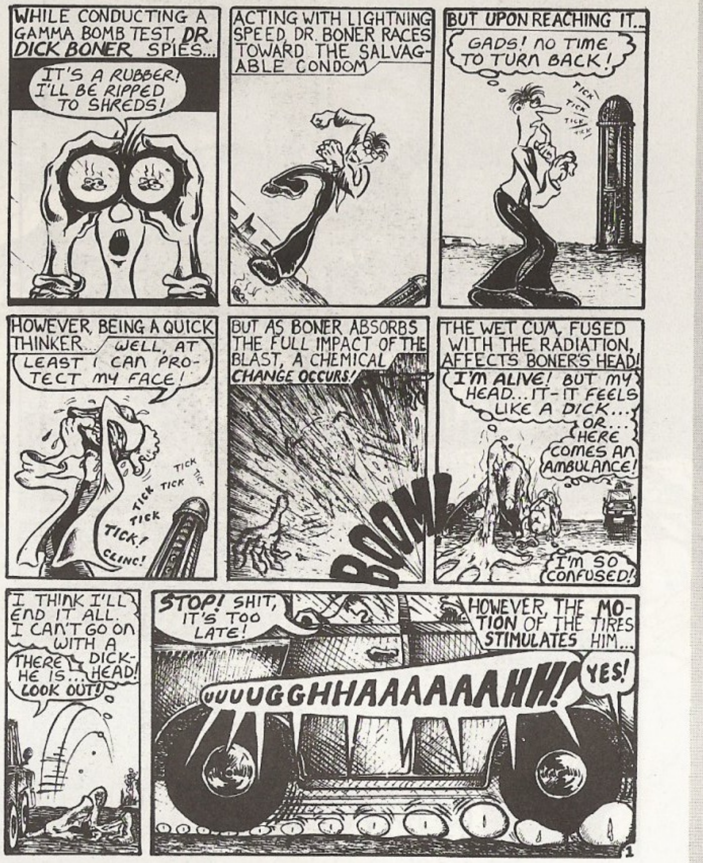

NOW LET ME SEE........
IT ALL STARTED 'BOUT SIXTEEN YEARS AGO,..IN A LI'L FAST FOOD JOINT WHEN I HAD A SHIT!!!
RESTROOMS
© 1182 SAM KIETH
..."I FOUND A TOILET."..
"AND BEGAN MY SHITTIN' IMMEDIATELY!
BUT SUDDENLY-
"I HEARD VOICES!"
WACK
....OF......OF.....
.."WOMEN!?"
"I THEN REALIZED THAT I HAD MISTAKEN THE MEN'S TOILET FOR THE
WOMEN'S! BEING AFRAID OF GETTING CAUGHT,"...
"I STAYED THERE!
AND I'VE BEEN HERE EVER SINCE! WHY? WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?
END

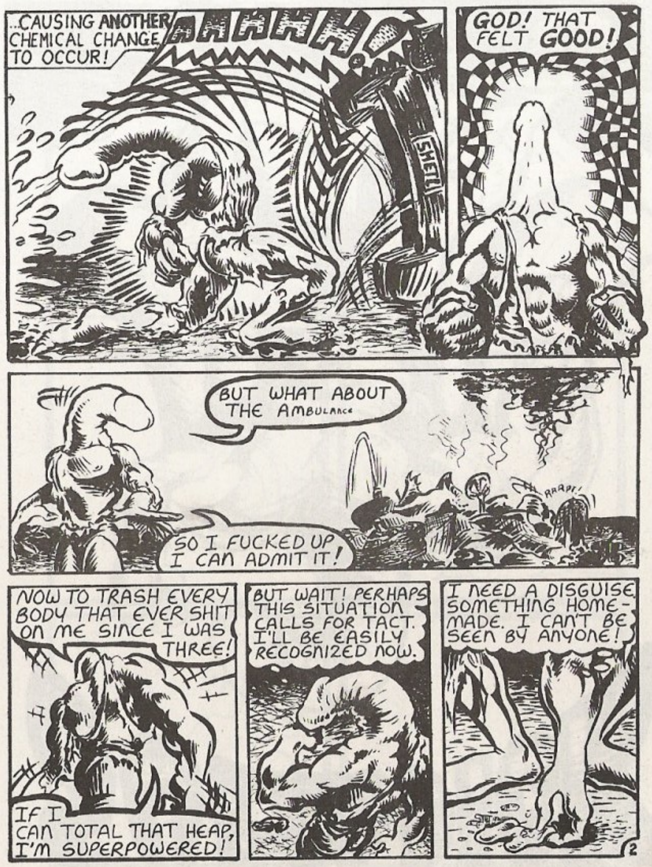

THE
BOOK
OF
NOBODY
AT ALL

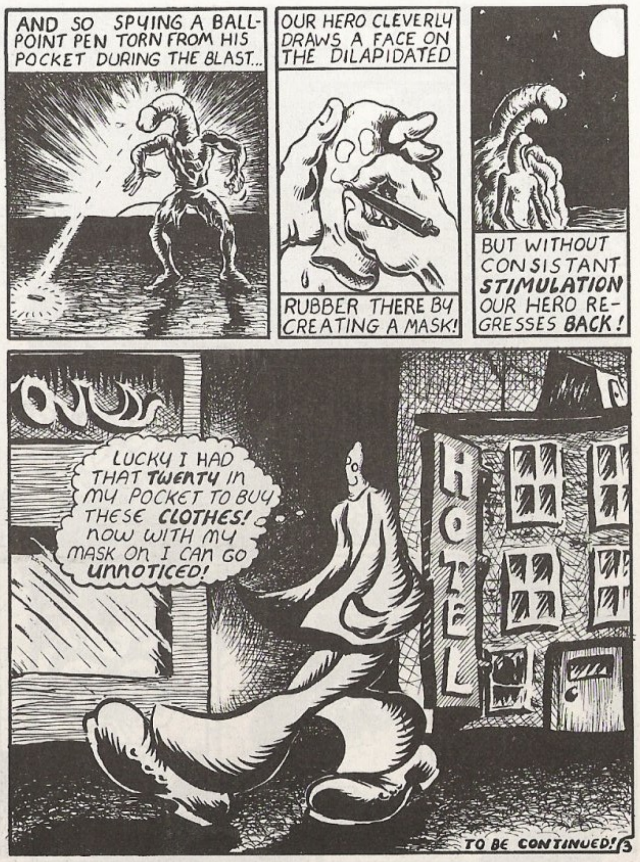

INTRODUCING.....
(©1982 SAM KIETH) #1
NOBODY AT ALL!
END


(©1982 SAM KIETH) #2
NOBODY AT ALL!
END

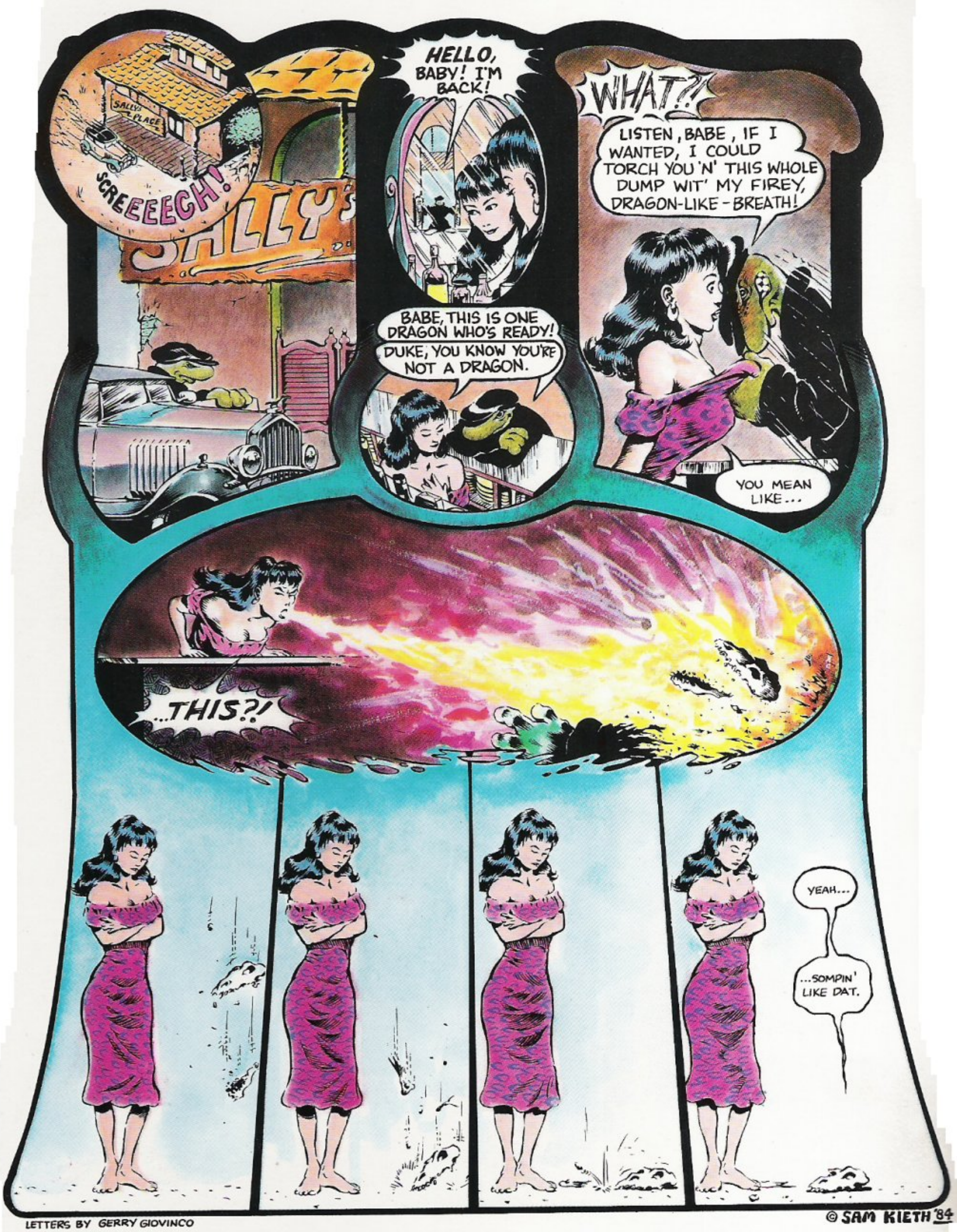

SUPER-DICK
©82 KIETH


WHILE CONDUCTING A GAMMA BOMB TEST, DR. DICK BONER SPIES...
IT'S A RUBBER! I'LL BE RIPPED TO SHREDS!
ACTING WITH LIGHTNING SPEED DR. BONER RACES TOWARD THE SALVAGABLE CONDOM
BUT UPON REACHING IT...
GADS! NO TIME TO TURN BACK!
TICK TICK TICK TICK
HOWEVER, BEING A QUICK THINKER...
WELL, AT LEAST I CAN PROTECT MY FACE!
TICK TICK TICK TICK TICK! CLINC!
BUT AS BONER ABSORBS THE FULL IMPACT OF THE BLAST, A CHEMICAL CHANGE OCCURS!
BOOM!
THE WET CUM, FUSED WITH THE RADIATION, AFFECTS BONER'S HEAD!
I'M ALIVE! BUT MY HEAD... IT- IT FEELS LIKE A DICK...
OR... HERE COMES AN AMBULANCE!
I'M SO CONFUSED!
I THINK I'LL END IT ALL. I CAN'T GO ON WITH A DICK-HEAD!
THERE HE IS... LOOK OUT!
STOP! SHIT, IT'S TOO LATE!
HOWEVER, THE MOTION OF THE TIRES STIMULATES HIM...
UUUUGGHHAAAAAAAHH!
YES!
1


...CAUSING ANOTHER CHEMICAL CHANGE TO OCCUR!
AAAHHH!
SHELL
GOD! THAT FELT GOOD!
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE AMBULANCE
SO I FUCKED UP I CAN ADMIT IT!
ARRP!
NOW TO TRASH EVERY BODY THAT EVER SHIT ON ME SINCE I WAS THREE!
IF I CAN TOTAL THAT HEAP, I'M SUPERPOWERED!
BUT WAIT! PERHAPS THIS SITUATION CALLS FOR TACT. I'LL BE EASILY RECOGNIZED NOW.
I NEED A DISGUISE SOMETHING HOME-MADE. I CAN'T BE SEEN BY ANYONE!
2


AND SO SPYING A BALL-POINT PEN TORN FROM HIS POCKET DURING THE BLAST...
OUR HERO CLEVERLY DRAWS A FACE ON THE DILAPIDATED
RUBBER THERE BY CREATING A MASK!
BUT WITHOUT CONSISTANT STIMULATION OUR HERO RE-GRESSES BACK!
LUCKY I HAD THAT TWENTY IN MY POCKET TO BUY THESE CLOTHES! NOW WITH MY MASK ON I CAN GO UNNOTICED!
HOTEL
TO BE CONTINUED!
3

KIETH
87


SALLY'S PLACE
SCREEEECH!
SALLY'S
HELLO, BABY! I'M BACK!
BABE, THIS IS ONE DRAGON WHO'S READY!
DUKE, YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT A DRAGON.
WHAT?!
LISTEN, BABE, IF I WANTED, I COULD TORCH YOU 'N' THIS WHOLE DUMP WIT' MY FIREY, DRAGON-LIKE-BREATH!
YOU MEAN LIKE...
...THIS?!
YEAH...
...SOMPIN' LIKE DAT.

LETTERS BY GERRY GIOVINCO

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